OVER MY DEAD BODY

COMPLETE EPISODES

Keeping Up with This Kardashian

Nostradamus Returns

Steve Jobs: Reboot

Mae West: When I'm Bad, I'm Better!

Richard Nixon: Tricky Dick

Julia Child: Bon Appetit!

Tupac Shakur: Tupac Is Back

Phyllis Diller: Goodnight, I Love You!

Mark Twain: The Reports of My Death are Greatly Exaggerated!

Howard Cosell: I Never Played the Game

Walter Cronkite: And That's the Way It Is!

Dr. Ruth Westheimer: Get Some!

BY

STEVEN KUNES

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Over My Dead Body: Complete Episodes is a work of comedy and fiction. The interviews and dialogue are entirely fictional and created for entertainment purposes only. While the book features depictions of real historical figures and public personalities, the conversations, events, and situations are imaginary and should not be interpreted as factual representations of those individuals' words, beliefs, or actions.

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To
Johnny Carson
&
Norman Lear
&
Jack Rollins
&
Stu Robinson

INTRODUCTION

"The Ultimate Talk Show"

As a senior at Neshaminy High School in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, I was assigned to what was known as the A.V. Room in lieu of study hall. This was a position coveted by many of my fellow students. I got to check out audio-visual equipment to teachers for an upcoming class, and it made me feel important. Opaque projectors, film strip machines, movie projectors, reel-to-reel tape decks –- things that were quite useful in 1974 but collectors' items today.

I'd deliver the equipment to classrooms myself with a rolling cart. I found winding power cords and cleaning lenses therapeutic, even at seventeen, and it was in that A.V. Room where I found my life's calling.

Being a room that houses many TVs, I managed to have one turned on at all times, and I faithfully watched game shows ("The Hollywood Squares") and talk shows ("The Mike Douglas Show") and wondered where these showbiz folks came from, and how they got to where they were. What an interesting life they led, 3000 miles away in sunny California, far from the gloomy skies of Bucks County.

I made a hard decision in my senior year of high school to make my way to California to meet Paul Lynde and Wally Cox and Charlie Weaver and Peter Marshall. I loved watching those guys each day at 11:30 and wanted to hang out with them. I wanted to write jokes and witty asides for these funny people. I loved Phyllis Diller and Charles Nelson Reilly and Joan Rivers. Of course, I couldn't tell anyone my dreams because, on the few occasions I tried, I was laughed at and ridiculed. I felt it was okay to dream, but it turned out I was preaching to the wrong choir.

I never got to meet any of those showbiz folks from "The Hollywood Squares," but I did end up at NYU where I studied writing and literature and began a career as a magazine writer. I also never gave up on my dream of writing for television and, on March 16, 1983, TV legend Norman Lear -- to whom I dedicate this book -- hired me as an apprentice comedy writer. Norman paired me with older writers such as Jack Elinson, George Tibbles and Sol Weinstein, seasoned pros who taught me the ropes of delivering a script on schedule and always at 22:38 –- without fail. No film school could've provided such an education. I learned from the masters.

CUT TO: 38 years later. My mentors (except for Norman!) are long gone, as are the regulars on "Hollywood Squares." But I've written for too many shows to mention here. Some highlights include the 200th episode of "Love Boat" starring Andy Griffith and Cloris Leachman, and an episode of Norman's "a.k.a. Pablo" starring Merv Griffin

(whom I watched in that A.V. Room.) The bit part of the bellboy in a short-lived series called "Trial & Error" was played by a young, unknown actor named Brad Pitt. It was his first paid Hollywood role. You read that correctly: the dreamer from the A.V. Room wrote Brad Pitt's first role.

So how did "Over My Dead Body" come about? Simple...I fell in love with the talk show and the people on them. Especially Steve Allen, Dick Cavett and Johnny Carson. It was Steve Allen who came up with the idea of casting a dinner party with Abe Lincoln and Napoleon. Sketch comedy, yes, but what if they were the actual guests on a talk show? I woke up with that idea in 2013 and found myself at Hollywood Forever Cemetery standing beside Judy Garland, Bugsy Siegel and Cecil B. DeMille. Then it was off to Hillside to meet Al Jolson, Michael Landon and Lorne Greene. At Westwood Village Memorial Park, I was greeted by Rodney Dangerfield and Jack Lemmon, and of course, Forest Lawn was a casting director's dream, with Bogie and Bacall, Lon Chaney and Walt Disney in attendance. What I had on my hands was the ultimate talk show.

I'm sure getting a meeting with Jack Warner was no easy task for a writer, but he sure has plenty of time to spend with me now. By simply plugging a microphone into their headstones, voila, there's my talk show! No, I really don't think Jack Benny or Groucho Marx or Jimmy Durante would mind one bit being front and center for a new generation of viewers. Those guys did anything for a

laugh, and my concept certainly falls under the category of anything.

There was a little snag, however, when several of my crew members admitted they'd never heard of many of our guests, such as Jackie Gleason, Jack Webb, Mae West, Julia Child, Fred Astaire, Lauren Bacall, Audrey Hepburn, Jack Lemmon...I kid you not! A quick pivot was needed to make this show fly. I decided to let our guests tell the audience about themselves, then move to what they're working on now, what book they're writing, what new movie they're in –- and give us their take on current events. We're also not barred from discussing a particular topic, since they now have more freedom concerning what they can say given their deceased status.

One thing you may wish to know about this show: we never mention that a guest is dead. No mention of heaven, hell, ghosts and goblins. Rather, we treat each guest as if they're still with us, because they are; their work lives on in the fabric of our social conscience, whether we know it or not. We are a blend of all that came before us, and these stellar entertainers and prominent world figures came before us. Speaking of which, Winston Churchill will be joining us in Season 3.

What can I tell you, I love this show! At age 64, I'm living my dream and entertaining people to boot, by keeping my heroes alive and introducing them to a new generation. Our ratings indicate an equal number of viewers between 35-50 and 60-plus. And unlike any other show on

television, we will never run out of guests. "Over My Dead Body" will go on forever, as I'm sure that somebody will grab the reins once yours truly has, like Elvis, left the building.

I would like to thank the following people without whose help and support there would be no show: Marty Krzywonos, Patricia Gayles-Krzywonos, Chyanne Donnell, Ryan Sellers, Casey Shoemaker, Steve Clarkson, Tia Whitfield, Stephen-Craig Aristei, Mike Gewehr, Sean Patrick Conklin, Kim Addrisi, Lola Finley, Mike Best, Sam Stern, Mark Richardson, Sheila Daneshpayeh, Sid & Andy Davis, Bill McLaughlin, Nikki Gold, Gerard Bianco, Jr., George Fear, Frank Gerard, Tim Millaway, Byron Biddle, Ryan Saunders, Debbie Rudman, Gabe Castro, Roland Boyden, Kristen Spangenberg, Tricia Brioux, Brandon Dennison, Melissa Robbins, Toochukwu Anyachonkeya, Barbara Carlin, Zack Devine, Stanley Martin, Matt Fahey, Valerie Schultz, Aimee Gironimi, Stephen Sustarsic, David Paul Kirkpatrick, Charlie Fink (at Forbes), Alma & Chuck Kunes, Sayyed Muhammad and Dan "The Man" Gross.

A very special thank you to former Washington Post TV critic, Pulitzer Prize-winner (and friend) Tom Shales for his words of encouragement at a crucial moment when I was about to abandon the entire project: "Nice going! Funny AND mean, my favorite combination. Seriously, bravo, bro!"

If that wasn't enough, my mentor Norman Lear sent me an

e-mail when “Over My Dead Body” launched in 2017: “This is the best idea for a series that I can remember...it’s absolutely hilarious.”

So here they are -- the first twelve episodes of a dream that began in a high school A.V. room nearly fifty years ago. Not every dream is measured by how long it lasts. Some are measured simply by the fact that they came true. I hope you enjoy these conversations as much as I enjoyed writing them.

Steven Kunes
Bucks County, Pennsylvania
July 5, 2026

OVER MY DEAD BODY

COMPLETE EPISODES

"KEEPING UP WITH THIS KARDASHIAN"

(Pilot)

FADE IN:

EXT. INGLEWOOD MEMORIAL PARK - KARDASHIAN GRAVE - DAY

[Host is seated beside Robert Kardashian's headstone]

MARTY

Hi, I'm Marty Krzywonos here on location at Inglewood Memorial Park in L.A. How would you like to meet Robert Kardashian, the man who planted a seed that sprung into a reality television show?

ROBERT

I love that.

MARTY

I thought you would. For the first time since his death, Robert Kardashian will bring us up to date on his life, answer questions from viewers regarding his family, and tell us for the first time what was really in the Louis Vuitton bag that was given to him by his best friend, O.J. Simpson.

ROBERT

I also have an Armenian recipe to share.

MARTY

It's all on the next episode of "Over My Dead Body."

DISSOLVE TO:

[Opening Animated Credits & Theme Music]

CUT TO:

EXT. INGLEWOOD MEMORIAL PARK - ENTRANCE - DAY

[Host stands at the front entrance to this famous cemetery]

MARTY

Hello, I'm Marty Krzywonos and this is "Over My Dead Body" -- the only talk show that features the most interesting people that ever lived. Today, we're in Hollywood, California at Inglewood Memorial Park,

where famed attorney Robert Kardashian has taken up residence. Come on, let's go talk to him.

CUT TO:

EXT. INGLEWOOD MEMORIAL PARK -
KARDASHIAN GRAVE - DAY

[Host is now seated beside Robert Kardashian's headstone]

MARTY

As you all know, Kardashian was O.J. Simpson's best friend, lawyer, personal advisor, confidante, business partner, and tennis buddy. He was also the father of Kourtney, Kim, Khloé and Rob -- and you all know who they are.

ROBERT

I also founded a frozen yogurt company.

MARTY

We'll get to that. Welcome to the show, Mr. Kardashian.

ROBERT

Robert...

MARTY

Okay, Robert. First off, I want to thank you for coming on our show. I realize this is the only interview you've agreed to since your death in 2003.

ROBERT

That's right. But I felt it was necessary to correct a number of things that have been reported about me and my family.

MARTY

A lot of people, when they hear the name Robert Kardashian, immediately think of your daughters or O.J. Simpson. But for the people who may be ignorant as to your importance in world history, can you start by telling our audience a little about yourself, your upbringing, where you were born -- that sort of thing?

ROBERT

Sure. I was born in L.A., my dad was rich and I was a spoiled kid. He owned a meat-packing company, the largest in Southern California. As a result, I did drugs and screwed a bunch of girls and went to college and did more drugs and screwed more girls. Then, I went to law school because I heard that being a lawyer is like legalized stealing.

MARTY

So you were working as a lawyer?

ROBERT

I was suing people left and right. Then one day in 1969, I'm on a tennis court at USC and meet O.J. Simpson. From that point on, he became my entire life.

MARTY

O.J. was your life?

ROBERT

I don't want to talk about it -- but of course I will, because without O.J. I'd have no personal identity.

MARTY

What was it about O.J. Simpson that appealed to you?

ROBERT

Hanging around O.J. was a lot of fun and it got me girls. Mostly his skanky leftovers. People used to think I represented him. I really didn't, except that I paid off a few of his date rape victims.

MARTY

So O.J. trusted you. What type of cases did you handle?

ROBERT

I filed strictly nuisance suits.

MARTY

I read that one day you just decided to quit being a lawyer and went into the music business.

ROBERT

I used to go to the movies during the week -- sometimes I'd sit in a dark theater all day. O.J. would call me Pee Wee. Anyway, I hated the dead silence of the theater

between movies and I thought, wouldn't it be great to play music, so I formed the company called Movie Tunes and sold pre-recorded elevator music to theater chains.

MARTY

Was it successful?

MARTY

Do the words 30 million bucks mean anything to you?

MARTY

Understood.

ROBERT

I also started a magazine called “Radio & Records” that I sold for a bunch of money to some Japanese idiot.

MARTY

According to the L.A. Times, you and O.J. started a company called Juice, Inc.

ROBERT

Yes. We sold frozen yogurt, mostly to all the pot heads in California.

MARTY

And then you got married?

ROBERT

That's the other thing I'm known for, marrying Kris who I thought was the love of my life, but apparently not,

because she couldn't keep her designer jeans up.

MARTY

Do I sense a bit of resentment there?

ROBERT

Not at all. I've been dead for the last 14 years, so I've moved on -- plus she married a queer.

MARTY

Let's back up for a minute...

ROBERT

Karma bit her in the ass.

MARTY

What went wrong, Robert?

ROBERT

I thought we were very happy. We had 4 children and lived in Beverly Hills, but I don't know. Kris was pulling a disappearing act on me, so I tried to follow her, but that didn't work -- so I hired a private detective and he caught her cheating three times in three months. Years later, Kris said she knew she was being followed, she knew we were watching her, and she liked it and even wondered if people who watch TV would tune in if they could.

MARTY

Maybe you planted a seed in her mind to do a reality show someday...

ROBERT

No, the stable boy planted his seed, and it wasn't in her mind.

MARTY

So you got divorced when you found out?

ROBERT

Well, we didn't exactly renew our vows.

MARTY

Kris once said in an interview that you were a loyal, loving, wonderful husband and father -- and an excellent role model.

ROBERT

I was so wonderful that she got plowed by at least a dozen guys during our marriage. You know, the high hard one.

MARTY

The one-eyed trouser snake.

ROBERT

Exactly. But I agree with her, I <u>am</u> a wonderful guy.

MARTY

Okay...Beth Herbst, a viewer from Delran, New Jersey wants to know how you feel about Chris' marriage to Bruce Jenner?

ROBERT

That's a good question, Beth. You know, I was just talking about that with Johnnie Cochran, and he said, “Life's a bitch, and then you marry one.”

MARTY

You and Johnnie hang out together?

ROBERT

I can't avoid the guy, he's buried about a hundred feet away. There goes the neighborhood.

MARTY

So Bruce, who is now Caitlyn...

ROBERT

That's all bullshit. Bruce is a very jealous type and wanted to upstage my kid’s TV show and figured if he said he was a woman, he'd get his own reality series and beat them in the ratings.

MARTY

You think he's that jealous?

ROBERT

Come to think of it, maybe he is a woman. (beat) I think Debbie Reynolds did the same thing when her daughter died. “Not so fast,” she said.

MARTY

Jeff Young, a viewer from Santa Cruz, California writes – "According to the San Francisco Chronicle, Mr. Kardashian graduated from Loyola Marymount Law School, then gave up his license to practice and went into the movie theater music and frozen-yogurt businesses. How does that all lead to his becoming a member of The Dream Team?"

ROBERT

It wasn't my idea, Jeff. I knew everything about my "killer best friend," and Marcia Clark is no dummy -- she would've called me as a witness and if I didn't testify, they'd throw me in jail for contempt of court. I certainly didn't want my ass-drilling like O.J. got, but that's another story. So Robert Shapiro told me to contact the California Bar Association and reactivate my license, then he put me on the legal team as a volunteer. As his lawyer, I could not be made to testify against O.J. I got to sit next to him during the entire trial, but did absolutely nothing except smell his disgusting suit for fifteen months.

MARTY

O.J. smelled?

ROBERT

Judge Ito kept O.J.'s three suits in his chambers and they'd choose one each day for him to wear, but they didn't clean them very often. So whenever we'd have to meet in

chambers with the judge, the room smelled like a monkey house. One time, Johnnie Cochran suggested a gag order for the lawyers to stop all the press frenzy, and Judge Ito said, “I'm gagging right now!”

MARTY

Jennifer Bagnato, a fan from Beach Haven New Jersey asks, “What was Marcia Clark really like?”

ROBERT

She's a lesbian, no real shock there, right? But back then she thought she was straight.

MARTY

Getting to the famous low-speed car chase which began at your house. According to numerous reports, while O.J. waited to be arrested and charged with double-murder, he stayed in your house in Sherman Oaks.

ROBERT

Correct. He was actually planning to kill himself and was staying in my daughter Khloe's room. I told him to go out back if he was gonna blow his brains out. Al Cowlings and I were keeping an eye on him.

MARTY

And then he took off?

ROBERT

Yes. He and Al took off and I got to read his bullshit farewell letter to the press. O.J. was heading to Nicole's

grave to pull a “Romeo & Juliet,” but the LAPD spotted him first.

MARTY

Jill Leclair from Pompano Beach, Florida asks, “Did you really help O.J. Simpson dump the knife and bloody clothes?”

ROBERT

Jill, while some people insist there's more to the story, my official account is that O.J. tossed them in a trash dumpster behind a coffee shop on Melrose Avenue. They were gone before he got to LAX.

MARTY

Edna Weiss from Chicago writes, “What was in the Louie Vuitton bag?”

ROBERT

That's the number one question I get asked, Edna. Just smelly clothes from his trip to Chicago.

MARTY

Bob Rush in Dunkirk, New York wants to know, “Who's more feminine -- Caitlyn Jenner or Marcia Clark?”

ROBERT

First of all, forget about Caitlyn, okay? The guy's name is Bruce, which is already gay enough. And Bruce is much more feminine than Marcia, not that the competition is all that stiff.

MARTY

Caitlyn Jenner received a "Courage Award" in 2015 at the ESPY Awards in front of a worldwide audience, right?

ROBERT

Johnnie Cochran and I watched together and laughed our asses off. Johnnie said, "Any guy who could wear a Vera Wang gown on national television deserves an award for courage. What Bruce did took real balls!"

MARTY

Just recently, Caitlyn Jenner told Tucker Carlson on FOX that she wore a bra and panties under her clothes for decades, and had a secret closet behind her regular bedroom closet that contained women's clothing and make-up.

ROBERT

Well whatdaya know. I watched the same interview. Love it. He's so weird he had to come out of two closets.

MARTY

And now Kris says that she fully supports Caitlyn.

ROBERT

Bullshit! Kris is livid and got exactly what she deserved -a husband who had a secret closet and wore a thong to special events. Plus, he used my daughters' make-up every day. I bet they were accusing each other of stealing the eyeshadow and lip gloss when really it was their stepfather.

MARTY

During the same Fox interview, Bruce, now Caitlyn, promoted her new memoir, “The Secrets of My Life.”

ROBERT

What secrets? Is there anything we don't already know about Bruce the loose goose?

MARTY

Well, for one thing, he claims he's a Republican who voted for Trump.

ROBERT

Bruce is a very conservative guy except when it comes to sucking dick. (beat) Actually, I think he's now a lesbian. Well, so am I.

MARTY

He also stated that he had “gender confirmation surgery” this past January.

ROBERT

Love that term. Like it’s some church event. Who came up with this shit? Look, we all saw the FOX interview. Brucie looks like a man, talks like a man, acts like a man -- he just had his dick chopped off. So, basically, he turned into a Jewish husband.

MARTY

I'm curious to know your thoughts about the sex tape that Kim made with rapper Ray J and how that may have affected your opinion of her?

ROBERT

First of all, it was no surprise. What people don't realize is that her mother also made a sex tape with Ray J titled, "But You Can Call Me Ray."

MARTY

How old are your children now?

ROBERT

No idea. Google it. They're getting up there.

MARTY

I read in an article that your five-year-old granddaughter, North West, has a $3,000 designer handbag.

ROBERT

I read the same article. Who knows? Maybe we should ask her what's in the bag?

MARTY

Your grandfather, Tom, was in the garbage collection business. Did you ever work for him as a child?

ROBERT

On some weekends, I ride the back of the truck. This came

in handy years later when I had to dump the knife and bloody clothes. Did I just say that?

MARTY

David Sheehan, a loyal viewer from Marina del Rey, California writes: “I understand that O.J. Simpson was an usher at your wedding.”

ROBERT

Yes, David, and I was the best man when O.J. married Nicole. After he saw me get married, he thought he'd take a stab at it.

MARTY

What effect did the “Trial of the Century” have on your family?

ROBERT

A very good one. It gave Kris the idea for doing reality TV. The press was always following us and she enjoyed it -- just as she enjoyed being watched by my private detective.

MARTY

In 2003, you died from throat cancer -- only 6 weeks after being diagnosed. Were you scared when the doctor gave you the news?

ROBERT

I was somewhat scared, and really found the whole thing hard to swallow. I immediately proposed to my girlfriend

and married her a week later before telling her I was going to die. Surprise!

MARTY

Okay, here's an important question from Susan Taro in Ellicott City, Maryland: “What are your thoughts on Fred Goldman?”

ROBERT

Susan, thanks for watching...that's a real hot button with me. O.J. calls him “Fred Golddigger” and I agree. He's the kind of guy who will show up at a party and go through everybody's jackets in the closet -- fishing for change. And what a crybaby. Fred hadn't seen his son in like ten years and now he weeps at the mention of his name. Boo hoo, Freddie, with that stupid handlebar mustache -- like lose that already. One day, during the trial, Fred was in the hallway on his cell phone, arguing with the tile man over a kitchen counter. And he'll never refer to O.J. by name, he just calls him The Killer. You watching this, Freddie? O.J., O.J., O.J.!

MARTY

That bad, huh?

ROBERT

Let me put it this way -- everybody agrees with O.J. that Fred Goldman should’ve been the one to return the glasses.

MARTY

It's been widely published that Fred Goldman claims you have evidence that would've clearly convicted O.J.

ROBERT

Freddy boy claims a lot of things -- like he loved his son, which is bullshit. Anyway, he has no proof of that and everything he says is false. But...he's right...I hid tons of evidence, just noting that Fred the Douchebag knows about. Then, I pretended to be appalled when O.J. was acquitted, but that's another story.

MARTY

What did you think of David Schwimmer's performance in the recent O.J. Simpson's mini-series?

ROBERT

The guy actually took playing me seriously, so obviously I loved it. Great guy. I, Robert G Kardashian, was the role of his lifetime. Thanks, David!

MARTY

My sources tell me that you've got a new series in development as well. Can you share with our viewers a little bit about it?

ROBERT

Absolutely. It's called "Keeping Up with This Kardashian," and I'm very excited about it. We'll do a mixture of segments that offer something for everybody.

Relationship advice from Carl Jung, financial tips from J. Paul Getty, Armenian recipes from my grandmother, Hamas, that sort of thing. A cross between Oprah and Ellen -- except with much smarter guests.

MARTY

What type of recipes?

ROBERT

We'll begin with Armenian flatbread with cheese, then move on to khashlama, which is a lamb dish cooked with meat and vegetables -- that was my mom's specialty. And we'll do my dad's favorite, aris, which is wheat porridge with chicken.

MARTY

You just made me hungry.

ROBERT

We'll also make you laugh. We have a segment in each show called "What's in the Bag?"

MARTY

Don't tell me...

ROBERT

What people don't realize is that there were actually two Louis Vuitton bags. The large garment bag you always see on the news contained O.J.'s dirty clothes. But the second, smaller bag -- which belonged to Nicole by the way -- contained just one item, which is still there. Plus, I've

added to it. (beat) Go ahead, don't be shy...

MARTY

Is this a knife sharpener? (beat) I'm speechless.

ROBERT

So was Nicole.

MARTY

What else is in here?

ROBERT

Jokes for my new show. I have the largest collection of O.J. Simpson jokes in the world. I've been collecting them since the trial.

MARTY

[Removes jokes one index card at a time]

Who's the dumbest person in America?

ROBERT

O.J.'s next girlfriend.

MARTY

What are two things that O.J. has that every man wants?

ROBERT

A Heisman Trophy and a dead wife.

MARTY

Oh, come on. (beat) Why did O.J.'s kids want to go live with their dad?

ROBERT

They knew they could get away with murder.

MARTY

What were Ron Goldman's last words?

ROBERT

Say, aren't you O.J. Simpson?

MARTY

What's the difference between Tang and O.J.?

ROBERT

Tang won't kill you.

MARTY

What did Johnnie Cochran say when he was accused of beating his wife?

ROBERT

Well, at least I didn't kill her like some people I know! (beat) Hey, I'll be here all week.

MARTY

Yes, you will. (beat) I want to thank you for joining us today, Robert Kardashian. We'll all keep an eye out for your new show.

ROBERT

You are quite welcome.

MARTY

[Turns to camera] From Inglewood Memorial Park in Los Angeles, I'm Marty Krzywonos. We'll see you again soon on the next episode of "Over My Dead Body."

CUT TO:

[Roll End Credits]

FADE OUT.

"NOSTRADAMUS RETURNS"

(Episode 2)

FADE IN:

INT. NOSTRADAMUS GRAVESITE - DAY

[Host is seated in front of Nostradamus' headstone on the wall]

BILL

Hello, I'm Bill McLaughlin and this is "Over My Dead Body," the only talk show that features interviews with the most interesting and compelling people in our history and culture.

In our next episode, we'll hear from Nostradamus, the man responsible for predicting events such as the French

Revolution, the rise of Adolph Hitler, the JFK assassination, 9/11, cloud computing, and Donald Trump.

NOSTRADAMUS

Not Donald Trump, but I did predict panty shields.

BILL

You were ahead of your time.

NOSTRADAMUS

And McDonald's, I predicted the fast-food industry. And dental floss.

BILL

And you'll have some new predictions for us, isn't that right?

NOSTRADAMUS

Absolutely.

BILL

Nostradamus, live from France, coming up.

DISSOLVE TO:

[Opening Animated Credits & Theme Music]

CUT TO:

INT. FRENCH CATHEDRAL - DAY

[Host stands in front of the main alter]

BILL

Hello, I'm Bill McLaughlin and welcome to another episode of "Over My Dead Body," the only talk show that features interviews with the most interesting and compelling people in our history and culture. Today, we've traveled "across the pond," as they say, to Salon de Provence, France, to speak with Nostradamus, who is undoubtedly the most prolific and influential prophet of all time. Although he died in 1566, he's remained quite active, as you're about to see, and has agreed to share a little about his life and give us an update on his current projects.

CUT TO:

INT. NOSTRADAMUS GRAVESITE - DAY

[Host is seated in front of Nostradamus' headstone on the wall]

BILL

Okay, let's get right into it. You've been credited with predicting the destruction of the Challenger Space Shuttle that blew up after take-off in 1986, the life and death of Mother Teresa, Hurricane Katrina, the Iraq War, the nuclear bombs that were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Barack Obama becoming the 44th President of the United States, the French Revolution, the JFK assassination, and the 9/11 attacks.

NOSTRADAMUS

I also predicted the death of Princess Diana and her affair with Dodi Fayed, Napoleon's rise, the Great Fires in London and Chicago, Adolph Hitler, and tic-tac breath mints.

BILL

That's remarkable.

NOSTRADAMUS

Oh yeah, and World War II.

BILL

I just need to ask, is any of this really true? And please don't be offended -- either way it's a pleasure speaking with you.

NOSTRADAMUS

Well, yes and no. I knew the shit was gonna hit the fan over and over again because that's, quite frankly, how life works. The more things change, the more they remain the same.

BILL

Did you make that up that saying as well?

NOSTRADAMUS

Probably. Look, the thing that bothers me most is that my name is only brought up in matters of gloom and doom, which has gotten to be a real drag. I've predicted many wonderful events as well.

BILL

Such as?

NOSTRADAMUS

The birth control pill. My very first prediction in 1555 was: “Tired soldiers and teachers will awaken, no fear in them, fate in their hands as they swallow the nectar and kick into rabbit gear and babies come no more.”

BILL

Any other wonderful events?

NOSTRADAMUS

Sure. I predicted Viagra, but by another name -- Mydixadril. I also predicted hearing aids, silicon breast implants, mouthwash and matching fanny packs. Believe me, nobody but this guy could’ve predicted matching fanny packs.

BILL

Nostradamus, here’s something I’d like cleared up: “The great man will be struck down in the day by a thunderbolt. Another falls at nighttime.” Scholars are pretty much unanimous in concluding that you’re describing JFK and his brother Robert.

NOSTRADAMUS

Wrong. I was referring to the time Lee Trevino got struck by lightning, and Tiger Woods getting sued for divorce. I predicted golf so it makes sense. Do your homework.

BILL

Okay. “From the depths of the west in Europe, a young child will be born of poor people, he who by his tongue will seduce a great troop, his fame will increase towards the realm of the east.” That’s Hitler, right?

NOSTRADAMUS

Nope. Pee Wee Herman. You need to focus on tongue.

BILL

Okay, one more. “The great wall will fall, the King will be executed, his death coming soon will be lamented, and the soil will be bloodied.” Clearly the French Revolution.

NOSTRADAMUS

The invention of Tampax. (beat) Look, I feel as visionaries go I was damn good, and for the last 451 years but who’s counting I’ve sat back and watched pretty much everything I predicted come true -- yet people often believe my prophecies mean something else.

BILL

There’s a big difference between the French Revolution and Tampax.

NOSTRADAMUS

Not as much as you might think.

BILL

I understand you spent a good portion of your life developing a cure for the plague, and that your first wife and two children died from it anyway.

NOSTRADAMUS

So what's your point? For almost five centuries people are busting my balls over this shit. Like you guys are so smart. How's that cure for cancer coming along?

BILL

Touche. Nostradamus, there have been hundreds of books written about you...

NOSTRADAMUS

Yes, and you're holding in your hand the best one ever written.

[Bill holds up "Nostradamus for Dummies"]

BILL

It says here that you were buried in a chapel that is now a two-star French bistro, and then moved to this wall after your bones were stolen during the French Revolution.

NOSTRADAMUS

Correct, but I got them back except for my left femur, which is floating around in Italy from what I hear. The last I heard, Michael Jackson tried to get it at a Sotheby's auction. I predicted his death, by the way.

[Bill thumbs through book]

BILL

Your dad was a money and grain dealer?

NOSTRADAMUS

No. That was my grandfather. He was a Jew but converted to Catholicism to get a double dose of guilt. My dad was a notary. Not too many of them in the 1500s.

BILL

And you went to college for a year but then the school closed due to an outbreak of the plague, so you traveled around for eight years seeking remedies and came up with "rose petal lozenges."

NOSTRADAMUS

You suck on them. Yum yum. Look, I felt I had to show something for my efforts. Then I was accepted to medical school but got kicked out almost immediately when they found out I was an herbal pharmacist. Kind of like being a chiropractor today. In other words, a quack. (MAKES QUACKING SOUND) Quack, quack.

BILL

Then at some point you wrote an annual Almanac that was quite popular.

NOSTRADAMUS

Hard to believe, since nothing in it was accurate. My weather predictions came true only 5.73 percent of the

time. My astrological predictions were a joke. If we had football or basketball to bet on back then I would've lost every game.

BILL

And...

NOSTRADAMUS

I pretty much pioneered the Peter Principle when I started making world predictions. I sat in my attic and smoked a ton of ground nutmeg and the next thing you know, King Henry the Second, you've heard of him, right? Well, his wife's name was Catherine and she calls me to her castle. I thought I was gonna get my head chopped off, but she loved my predictions so I was in like Erroll Flynn -- who I also predicted.

BILL

You liked Erroll Flynn?

NOSTRADAMUS

Not at all. Bogie was the man, and DeNiro, very cool. Right now I really like Robert Downey, Jr. And Kevin Spacey is good.

BILL

We have Mike Dougherty on the phone from Sedona, Arizona.

MIKE

Hello, Mr. Nostradamus.

NOSTRADAMUS

Hi, Mike. Actually, my real name is Michel -- a French version of Mike.

MIKE

I just want to know what's the best thing about being you, and what's the worst thing?

NOSTRADAMUS

Good question. The best thing is that people listen to me and who doesn't like that? The worst thing is that I have to watch every little thing I say because people plan their lives around it. It's a mixed blessing but my cross to bear, so to speak.

BILL

It could be worse.

NOSTRADAMUS

Don't cry for me Argentina, right?

BILL

Right. (beat) Now, would you mind if we touched on politics a bit?

NOSTRADAMUS

I knew it was coming. Did I predict Donald Trump is my number one question from tourists. Every day, Donald Fucking Trump.

BILL

Did you see any of this coming?

NOSTRADAMUS

Trump as President I blew, I'll admit it. But I predicted Shirley Temple and flea collars.

BILL

Kathy Selander from Key Largo, Florida is on the line.

KATHY

Mr. Nostradamus, I wrote a paper on you in college. I think you're wonderful and I love your beard and my question is do you have a Twitter account?

NOSTRADAMUS

Kathy, you flatter me. As a matter of fact, I do have a Twitter account. I make it a point to tweet a few times a week. Not so much about predictions but about my day, restaurant tips, traffic conditions, things of that nature.

BILL

Nostradamus, can you tell us a little about the cookbook you wrote in 1555?

NOSTRADAMUS

It was more or less a vegen-type deal, since my first wife had this thing for risotto. I tried to capitalize on upcoming trends.

BILL

According to Professor Sidney Offit, who teaches a grad-level course on you at New York University, you predicted your own death.

NOSTRADAMUS

This guy is an idiot. He's made more money interpreting my writing than I did from my writing.

BILL

So it's not true?

NOSTRADAMUS

Nope. I didn't predict my own death, other than the fact that I knew I'd die someday. Why nobody thinks to come to the source is beyond me.

BILL

Professor Offit didn't contact you?

NOSTRADAMUS

You guys are the first people who ever approached me for an interview. And yet I'm watching, say, the Discovery Channel with all this wild stuff about me, it's unbelievable.

BILL

Do you feel pigeon-holed?

NOSTRADAMUS

Absolutely. What's gonna happen, Nostradamus? Every day for almost five hundred stinkin' years. It's all my fault, I take full responsibility, but like really, dude?

BILL

So you don't want to talk about, say, the Dodgers?

NOSTRADAMUS

You don't need to be a psychic to know they're going nowhere this year. Same with San Francisco, same with the Yankees. Derek Jeter's gonna get hit with a sex scandal next year. Don't quote me on that.

BILL

Okay, you had six children. Is there anything you see about kids today that you don't like?

NOSTRADAMUS

The hand-held devices have caused a human disconnect. Although there are some neat apps available, like Angry Birds.

BILL

Melissa Lindero from Woodbury, New Jersey, say hi to Nostradamus.

MELISSA

Oh my God, Nostradamus, how are you?

NOSTRADAMUS

Hi Melissa.

MELISSA

I just want to know your idea of a perfect date.

NOSTRADAMUS

First of all, I want to congratulate you and Alex on your upcoming marriage, and rest assured you guys will have a very happy life together. And the two sets of twins will be a blast.

MELISSA

What??!!

NOSTRADAMUS

As for my perfect date, I'm a big believer in romantic candlelight dinners, slow dancing, long walks on the beach, a good bottle of Bordeaux and a fresh cannoli.

MELANIE

I knew you were a romantic.

NOSTRADAMUS

Then I like to take the woman home, make her some sleepy time tea, and bend her over like a golden retriever.

BILL

According to Wikipedia, you made 6,338 predictions which cover world events until the year 3797.

NOSTRADAMUS

I did spin a lot of bullshit in my time, let me tell you that. Did you ever see that movie "Ghost" with Whoopi Goldberg?

BILL

Of course. Where she played the psychic?

NOSTRADAMUS

That was pretty much what I did, except I did it first. I find that people won't believe it when you tell them something crazy that's already happened, but if you tell them what you think will happen they all shut up and listen.

BILL

Like those old E.F. Hutton TV commercials.

NOSTRADAMUS

Exactly.

BILL

According to Peter Lemesurier, who wrote ten books about you, your predictions were almost never correct, and that it's the reader who decides the meaning of your prophecies.

NOSTRADAMUS

Whatever. Peter has made quite a little industry from yours truly and stops by here maybe once a year and never once wipes the dirt off my goddamn stone.

BILL

But isn't it true that a person can make one of your prophecies mean almost anything?

NOSTRADAMUS

That's the point, I wrote them all that way. Delusion is in the mind of the beholder.

BILL

How accurate are the various films and books about you?

NOSTRADAMUS

They're not, for the most part. I liked the National Geographic Channel's documentary, and the recent show about me on Discovery. And I loved the old Orson Welles narration of me. What a fat blowhard he was, but the show itself was cool.

BILL

Is there anything you predicted that we don't know about?

NOSTRADAMUS

Ketchup. I predicted ketchup.

BILL

I read that in 1562 you were imprisoned briefly.

NOSTRADAMUS

She said she was eighteen. You gonna rub that in my face or move on?

BILL

Nostradamus...

NOSTRADAMUS

Call me Michel...better yet, just call me Mike...that's what my friends call me.

BILL

Okay, Mike. I have to ask, not just for myself but for the benefit of our viewers, what do you make of everything that's happening in the world today?

NOSTRADAMUS

Well, not even I could've predicted any of this nonsense. The killing, yes, of course, but the absurdity of life in 2017 is unfathomable. Scrapbooking...like really?

BILL

I read that you've always claimed your gift came from your mother's side of the family.

NOSTRADAMUS

My mom was intuitive, that's for sure. When I became a teenager, she'd always put a box of tissues on my nightstand.

BILL

The Encyclopedia Britannica states that your Book of Prophecies was placed on the Vatican's Index of Forbidden Books in 1781.

NOSTRADAMUS

You know how the church can get about anything that spanks of immorality.

BILL

Bite your lip.

NOSTRADAMUS

I just did.

BILL

Since you are taught in pretty much every school and at every grade level, we thought we'd share with you letters from some young students so they can get to learn a little more about you -- from the horse's mouth, so to speak.

NOSTRADAMUS

Shoot.

BILL

Meredith Lobel, a high school senior from Cornish, New Hampshire wants to know the name of your favorite book.

NOSTRADAMUS

"Passionate Marriage" by Dr. David Schnarch. It's the ultimate how-to on keeping your sexual relationship alive, even when you find out your husband is gay.

BILL

Hubert Mitchell, a fifth-grader from Riverside, California

wants to know if you have a favorite song.

NOSTRADAMUS

I love Joni Mitchell and "A Free Man in Paris" is my favorite.

BILL

Helene Brown, a seventh-grader from Jackson, Mississippi asks what was your most embarrassing moment?

NOSTRADAMUS

I farted in front of Queen Catherine once. Actually, it was a bit more than that. She called me to the castle and I thought I might get beheaded, but she just wanted me to autograph my book. I was so relieved I shit in my pants.

BILL

Sam Stern from San Jose, Costa Rica wants to know if you have a favorite quote.

NOSTRADAMUS

Actually, I have two: The first from Voltaire, who said, "History is a fiction that has been agreed upon," which I think really applies to my entire persona. And the second from Tennessee Williams, who said, "I'll give you fifty bucks if you let me screw you in the ass."

BILL

And Rift Fournier from St. Louis, Missouri, wants to know if you think Man will ever visit Mars.

NOSTRADAMUS

Every time a man sits down to dinner with a woman, he's on another planet.

BILL

And I have a question, if you don't mind...

NOSTRADAMUS

Not at all.

BILL

Do you think the United States will ever pay the national debt?

NOSTRADAMUS

You wanna know how I see it? You remember that movie "Risky Business?"

BILL

With Tom Cruise.

NOSTRADAMUS

Yes. Well the kid decides to throw a big party while his parents are gone for the weekend. The house gets trashed, but they keep cleaning it up and figure by the time the parents return the place will be okay. But things continue to get out of hand.

BILL

At one point the car ends up in the swimming pool, upside down.

NOSTRADAMUS

Their parents' new Porsche. So at that point in the story Tom Cruise just smiles and says one of my all-time favorite movie lines: "Sometimes you just gotta say what the fuck."

BILL

I remember.

NOSTRADAMUS

People can complain all they want, but nobody's gonna kick in to pay off a twenty-trillion-dollar debt. That's like trying to inflate the Goodyear blimp with a bicycle pump.

BILL

Interesting analogy.

NOSTRADAMUS

Hey, I have a joke for you.

BILL

Sure.

NOSTRADAMUS

Why did Nostradamus come home from work one evening and kick his dog?

BILL

I give up.

NOSTRADAMUS

Because he knew it was going to shit on the rug in five minutes. (beat) I do a stand-up act Monday nights during the summer.

BILL

During tourist season?

NOSTRADAMUS

Yes. Okay, Nostradamus walks into a bar and sits down next to a pretty woman and says to her, “I predict you’re going to slap my face in the next ten seconds.” And the pretty woman replies, “Why would I do that?” And Nostradamus answers, “Because you’re a dumb cunt.”

BILL

Nostradamus, we received a letter from a viewer who wants you to describe your typical day?

NOSTRADAMUS

Sure. I’m up at 5:30 a.m. sharp, spinning tales of gloom and doom in my head. So I masturbate to take the edge off, then try to talk myself out of my little funk by saying what the hell, I’m already dead so who gives a crap about what will happen today. Then I throw on my coat and walk half a block to Starbucks and order a venti caramel macchiato with whipped cream and chocolate shavings, and sit down at the front table.

BILL

So far it sounds like my day except for the I'm already dead part.

NOSTRADAMUS

I'll pick up the Paris and London papers, maybe even the fake New York Times, but I'll never get a chance to read them because people walk up to me all day long.

BILL

They want advice?

NOSTRADAMUS

Aren't you Nostradamus? Can you tell me blah blah fucking blah...it's like I'm in hell but with great coffee.

BILL

What do you think of all the psychics and fortune tellers over the years?

NOSTRADAMUS

Well they ain't yours truly. I may not be perfect but get a load of these insane predictions. You remember IBM, right?

BILL

Of course.

NOSTRADAMUS

In 1943, Thomas Watson, their CEO, said "I think there is

a world market for maybe five computers."

BILL

What a goofball.

NOSTRADAMUS

Tell me about it. In 1937, Gary Cooper turned down "Gone with the Wind" and said, "Let Clark Gable fall on his face."

BILL

Oops.

NOSTRADAMUS

In 1945, Admiral William Leahy told Harry Truman, "The atomic bomb will never go off, and I speak as an expert in explosives."

BILL

So none of them are Nostradamus.

NOSTRADAMUS

How about the president of Decca Records, who in 1962 turned down the Beatles and said, "Guitar music is on the way out." Or the Commissioner of the U.S. Patent Office, who in 1899 said, "Everything that can be invented has been invented."

BILL

They're clearly not you.

NOSTRADAMUS

These guys must've been smoking crack.

BILL

On page 74 of "Nostradamus for Dummies," it states that you used to stare into a bowl of water until a vision appeared -- and then you'd write it down in four lines called a quatrain.

NOSTRADAMUS

That's exactly right. I wouldn't stop staring until something came to me. It didn't take long because who wants to stare into a bowl of water when they could be out getting drunk and laid.

BILL

So as you can see, I brought a small bowl of water with me and I'm really hoping you'll interpret my vision.

NOSTRADAMUS

No problema.

[Bill stares into a bowl of water on a wooden stool]

BILL

Oh, wow. The sun. The moon. Hands that wave. A sundial.

NOSTRADAMUS

I'd say a clock or a wristwatch. Perhaps suggesting an imminent event.

BILL

Fire. Rain. A guitar. A bald old man.

NOSTRADAMUS

I get that a lot. It's James Taylor.

BILL

A vodka bottle. A skyscraper. Hair gel. A wedding bouquet. KY Jelly.

NOSTRADAMUS

A Vladimir Putin visit to the White House! (beat) You're gonna put me right out of business, Bill.

BILL

A black ATM machine.

NOSTRADAMUS

Barack Obama.

[Bill looks back up]

BILL

Nostradamus...Mike...do you have any regrets?

NOSTRADAMUS

Regrets...I've had a few, but then again...

BILL

Nostradamus, we have one more caller. Dave Crawsome from Doylestown, Pennsylvania.

NOSTRADAMUS

Hi, Dave.

DAVE

Hey, Nostradamus, when I heard you were gonna be on the show I did some checking on you, okay? Seems you were born on December 14, 1503 -- so you're a Capricorn like my wife, which means you're supposed to be cautious and responsible.

NOSTRADAMUS

I'm aware of that. I was an astrologer as well as a physician and a prophet.

DAVE

Good for you, buddy. Well, looks like you were neither cautious nor responsible. Turns out that you told everybody you were a Black Plague specialist, and yet your wife and two children died from the plague so they ran you out of town on a rail. Plus, your dead wife's father sued you to get his dowry back. Then you ran off and married a rich widow and had six more kids and wrote your bullshit predictions in the attic of the house that she paid for.

NOSTRADAMUS

Wow. That was some little speech, Dave. Well, all I can say is you can now put the dick back in your mouth, you pompous piece of dog shit. We didn't have antibiotics in the 1500s, so consider yourself lucky. Otherwise your

wife would be blind from all the infected cock she's sucked. Asshole!

BILL

Now, now. (beat) How about a parting thought for our viewers.

NOSTRADAMUS

Yes. Find your own inner prophet and then milk it for all it's worth.

BILL

Sounds like a plan.

NOSTRADAMUS

And live every day as if it were your last. Because in 673 days, it will be.

BILL

Thank you, Nostradamus. And thank all of you for watching. From Salon de Provence, that's in France, I'm Bill McLaughlin, and we'll see you again on the next episode of "Over My Dead Body."

CUT TO:

[Roll End Credits]

FADE OUT.

"STEVE JOBS: REBOOT"

(Episode 3)

FADE IN:

EXT. ALTA MESA CEMETERY - STEVE JOBS' GRAVE - DAY

[Host is seated beside Steve Jobs' headstone]

MARTY

Hi, I'm Marty Krzywonos and I'll be hosting the next episode of "Over My Dead Body," the only talk show that brings to life the most influential and compelling people in our history and culture. We'll travel to the heart of Silicon Valley for a rare interview with the co-founder of Apple Computers, Steve Jobs. I'll bet you guys think you know everything about him. Well, think again.

CUT TO:

[Images of Joan Baez, Cheryl Ladd, Joni Mitchell, Diane Keaton -- and then to Jobs' headstone]

JOBS

Which of these famous actresses do you think I slept with?

MARTY (O.S.)

How about Door Number One?

JOBS

Let's try all of them.

BACK TO SCENE - ON HOST

MARTY

[Smiles to camera]

All of them it is. "Over My Dead Body" with Steve Jobs, coming right up.

DISSOLVE TO:

[Opening Animated Credits & Theme Music]

CUT TO:

EXT. ALTA MESA CEMETERY - DAY

[Host stands at the front entrance]

MARTY

Hello, I'm Marty Krzywonos and this is "Over My Dead Body" -- the only talk show that brings to life the most

compelling and influential people from our history and culture. Today, we've travelled to Palo Alto, California, to the heart of Silicon Valley and, more specifically, Alta Mesa Memorial Park where our guest, Apple co-founder and computer pioneer Steve Jobs has taken up residence. Come on, let's go say hello.

[Host exits stage right]

CUT TO:

EXT. ALTA MESA CEMETERY - STEVE JOBS' GRAVE - DAY

MARTY (V.O.)

As you all know, Steve Jobs invented the Macintosh personal computer, the iPod, the iPad, the iPhone...

[Host is now seated beside Steve Jobs' headstone]

MARTY (Contd.)

...and a whole bunch of neat stuff like that.

JOBS

I also founded Pixar.

MARTY

Yes, you did. Welcome to "Over My Dead Body," Mr. Jobs.

JOBS

Call me Steve.

MARTY

Okay, Steve. First off, I want to thank you for coming on our show. I realize you're a very busy man and that this is the first interview you've agreed to do since your death in 2011.

JOBS

You're quite welcome, Marty. I'm guessing most of the people watching this show are doing it on an iPhone or an iPad.

MARTY

No doubt. (beat) Mr. Jobs, Steve, would you mind telling our viewers a little about your background?

JOBS

Not at all. In 1955, I was placed for adoption, thank God, because my real father was a Syrian dude named Abdufattah Jandali. Try spelling that for the gym teacher. Anyway, my dad the Muslim figured my mom's family from the mid-west would never accept him -- like no shit, Sherlock. So I get placed for adoption and fortunately a white couple in San Francisco ended up with my introverted, nerdy ass.

MARTY

And how did that work out?

JOBS

Middle class all the way. I was a precocious little shit like

the rest of the kids in my neighborhood.

MARTY

At what point did you get the desire to invent things?

JOBS

When I was twelve, I wanted to build a frequency counter but didn't have the parts. So I looked William Hewlett up in the Palo Alto phone book and dialed his number and he actually answered. Not only did he give me the parts I needed but he offered me a summer job at HP. I was in heaven, although looking back on the experience, I think the guy just wanted to molest me.

MARTY

My understanding is that your adoptive dad, Paul, was a "repo man."

JOBS

That's why I never liked having license plates on my car. There's a law in California where you don't need plates for the first six months, so every six months I'd get a new Mercedes.

MARTY

And your mom, Clara, was too frightened to love you for the first six months of your life for fear of losing you?

JOBS

As a result, I'm still a breast man. (beat) Actually, she was afraid my real parents would change their mind and file a

lawsuit to get me back.

MARTY

I also read that your mom wanted to return you at age two.

JOBS

She flip-flopped. First, she feared losing me, then she feared keeping me. I think she just wanted an upgrade.

MARTY

Is that why you became a loner?

JOBS

Well, duh. I didn't bathe, plus I hated people. Still do. I basically wanted to create a bunch of products and connect the world so everybody would leave me the hell alone.

MARTY

What was the best thing that ever happened to you?

JOBS

Meeting Steve Wozniak in high school. I was thirteen when we met, he was eighteen. Loved that guy, although he may feel differently about me. I made him my bee-otch.

MARTY

Was he your best friend?

JOBS

Steve and Chrisann Brennan -- who I screwed on and off for years and we had a daughter together. They were my

only friends at Homestead High.

MARTY

What were they like?

JOBS

They were interesting. Wozniak was an electronics person, and Chrisann was into art and literature, which is why I think my products reflect both of those sensibilities. I didn't fit completely into either group. I was a Brainiac and a hippie.

MARTY

That's beautiful.

JOBS

I know. I can't believe I just said it.

MARTY

According to Time magazine, you started Apple with $1,350?

JOBS

Correct. I sold my VW microbus for $850 and Woz sold his HP calculator for $500.

MARTY

And rumor has it that you never learned to code.

JOBS

Who has time for all that? That's what Chinese people are for.

MARTY

What exactly was your role in the creation of Apple?

JOBS

Simple, Marty. I'm a facilitator. I assemble a group of people, tell them what to do and then take credit for it.

MARTY

Example...?

JOBS

In 1973, Woz designed his own scaled-down version of the Pong video game, called Breakout. I showed it to Atari, told them I invented it and they gave me a job.

MARTY

Did you tell your friend what you did?

JOBS

Hell no. As a matter of fact, they offered me fifty bucks for every chip I could eliminate without affecting the performance. I told Woz and he worked his ass off for four days and eliminated a hundred chips -- so Atari gave me five grand. Then I told Woz they only paid me fifteen hundred bucks and I gave him seven fifty.

MARTY

What did he say?

JOBS

He didn't know about it for ten years, but he cried when he found out. I guess you could say he was my personal Chinese laborer.

MARTY

And just so our audience is clear on the subject, is it true that you never finished college?

JOBS

I attended Reed College for one semester and audited classes for eighteen months after that, but never got a degree. However, I didn't jump into the computer thing right away.

MARTY

What did you do?

JOBS

In 1974, I travelled to India and stayed there for seven months.

MARTY

Why India?

JOBS

I thought it was the thing to do. My old buddy Daniel Kottke and I travelled 8,000 miles to get some enlightenment and to meet this jerk-off guru, and when we got there it turned out he died the year before. So I shaved

my head and came home and told everybody that we met and became close friends.

MARTY

You came home with a shaved head?

JOBS

Yup. That's when everybody really started taking me seriously. I made Daniel Kottke the first Apple employee. I fed him acid and got him to shave his head, too.

MARTY

So it was you, Steve Wozniak, and Daniel Kottke?

JOBS

And an idiot named Ronald Wayne. He decided that the company would never go anywhere so we bought him out for $800. What a crybaby. Good riddance.

MARTY

And you were off and running.

JOBS

More or less. Even though we were working out of a garage, we needed to raise money to keep afloat. So Woz and I -- okay Woz -- made a cheap digital "blue box" which was a device used to make free phone calls, and we -- okay I -- sold them illegally. We were able to make enough money to keep our little company called Apple going.

MARTY

By stealing from the phone company, you saved Apple?

JOBS

Ironic, huh? Since thirty years later we completely did them out of business. (beat) Who doesn't like stealing from the phone company?

MARTY

So in 1975...

JOBS

In 1975, I was 20 and Wozniak was 25 and we set up shop in my parents' garage which is where Woz invented the first Apple I computer. We built it from a typewriter, a cassette recorder and a black-and-white TV. Everybody thought we were nuts.

MARTY

And the rest is history.

JOBS

Only a year before, I was sleeping on a friend's floor, and returning Coke bottles for money and getting free meals from the Hari Krishna temple.

MARTY

According to Forbes, you were worth a million at 23, ten million at 24 and over a hundred million at 25.

JOBS

I could now afford deodorant. You know, when I worked at Atari they made me come in at night because I walked around barefoot and stunk.

MARTY

You became a father rather early on, is that right?

JOBS

Yes. In 1977, Chrisann got pregnant when Apple was in full swing.

MARTY

And according to what I read, Chrisann went on welfare and cleaned houses to support your child, Lisa, who was born in 1978.

JOBS

I kept her pregnant and working in someone else's kitchen.

MARTY

And you had close to $400 million at the time?

JOBS

The press tried to portray me as a deadbeat dad. (beat) It was only a hundred million.

MARTY

So when Time magazine learned about this, they decided not to name you "Man of the Year" and instead gave the

award to the personal computer itself.

JOBS

That sucked, I'll admit, even worse than getting cancer -- but I did pay child support after we went public. I gave Chrisann $385 a month, so she no longer had to clean houses. She became a waitress.

MARTY

Steve...didn't you think that was just plain wrong?

JOBS

Denying paternity was kind of slimy. But, I did take my daughter to Whole Foods, and not too many people can afford to shop there. Even Bill Gates doesn't go there. In fact, the only person who can afford to go to Whole Foods is Jeff Bezos.

MARTY

So, you did see your daughter?

JOBS

Yes. And I taught her things of importance. Like parking in handicapped spaces without guilt. I've done it for years. Also, on Halloween, we had the scariest house in Silicon Valley. Lisa helped decorate it. Every year I'd wear the same costume -- I'd dress as Wozniak.

MARTY

Is that so?

JOBS

Look, I may not have been the best father in the beginning, but I got better. I was going to name my computer Claire, but changed it to Lisa, after my daughter. And the first time a mouse was ever used was with the Lisa computer. I stole the mouse idea from IBM, but with my daughter in mind.

MARTY

Steve, we have Kim Sennes, a ninth-grader from Henderson, Nevada on the line.

KIM

Mr. Jobs, I'm writing a school paper on driverless cars. Do you think they'll ever catch on, and will they really work?

JOBS

Good question, Kim. But think about it for a minute. We pretty much have them already. Since people text the whole time they're driving, the car essentially has no driver.

MARTY

Diane Cooper, a high school teacher from Matawan, New Jersey, say hello to Steve Jobs.

DIANE

[stoned]

Hi, Mr. Jobs. First of all, thank you so much for inventing the iPhone, I really love it. My question is, I was wondering if you smoke pot like me.

JOBS

Diane, I used to love pot. I called it turkey, and Sour Diesel was my favorite. The iPhone was designed for potheads like yourself, so thanks for calling.

MARTY

Steve, I read that you got stoned for the first time in 1970 and it was then that you discovered Bob Dylan, Moby Dick, Ernest Hemingway and Shakespeare.

JOBS

My favorite play is King Lear.

MARTY

You told Newsweek that taking LSD was one of the two or three most important things you ever did in your life.

JOBS

It was number three. Getting blown by Joan Baez was number one. The flashbacks were number two.

MARTY

Were you on LSD when you played the Mad Hatter in Alice in Wonderland?

JOBS

You really did your homework.

MARTY

Wozniak played the White Rabbit and Chrisann was Alice.

JOBS

We were all on acid, just like the author.

MARTY

In 1985, only nine years after founding Apple, you got fired from your own company. When you returned twelve years later, they were at the bottom of the barrel.

JOBS

It was a disaster, and turning the company around wasn't easy.

MARTY

Some former employees claim they were afraid to ride in an elevator with you at the time, fearing they might not have a job when the doors opened.

JOBS

I thought it was the ideal place to give people the shaft. Sorry, I had to say it.

MARTY

By 2008, Apple was the most valuable company in the world. At the same time, a class action suit was filed against you and other members of Apple's board of directors for securities fraud.

JOBS

Yeppers. We stole more money than Bernie Madoff by backdating stock transactions. Not bad for a guy with a GPA of 2.65.

MARTY

Mario Vitale from Bonita Springs, Florida, you have Steve Jobs on the line.

MARIO

Mr. Jobs.

JOBS

What's up, Mario?

MARIO

Two things. First -- how can you live with yourself hiring all those Asian kids? And second -- how was sex with Diane Keaton?

JOBS

If you're referring to child labor, Mario, I'm a big believer in giving kids a leg up. Bill Hewlett gave me a summer job at HP when I was twelve and I spent all day putting screws into frequency counters. And look where I am now. Well, not exactly now.

MARIO

You've got a twisted mind, pal.

JOBS

Look, Mario, I met with President Obama in 2010 and proposed that any foreign student who got an engineering degree at a U.S. university should automatically be offered a green card, to prevent those people from working overseas. I knew the president would never agree to that, so it made me look good and justified our use of child labor.

MARIO

You're a piece of work.

JOBS

As for Diane Keaton, I was surprised at how tight her pussy was considering Warren Beatty, Al Pacino and even Woody Allen had spent time in it. All she did was lay there and talk like Annie Hall. I couldn't even come. Now, Joan Baez was another story. She rode me like a racehorse. Not bad for an anorexic computer nerd, eh?

MARTY

Steve, Ashton Kutcher and Michael Fassbender both portrayed you on the big screen. Who did a better job?

JOBS

Michael Fassbender was by far the superior actor, but I prefer Aston Kutcher because he got to sleep with Demi Moore and Mila Kunis.

MARTY

By the way, Ashton Kutcher once quoted you as saying you'd never make e-books because nobody reads, anyway. How come you changed your mind?

JOBS

Same reason I always do -- the things took off, so I had my designer Jony Ive make one that was cooler. We were the first people to make it look like you were turning the pages of a book with your finger.

MARTY

In October of 2003, after making Apple the most successful company on the planet, you were diagnosed with a rare type of pancreatic cancer.

JOBS

Unfortunate, but true.

MARTY

According to the chief surgeon at Sloan Kettering in New York, by neglecting immediate treatment you essentially committed suicide.

JOBS

Yes, I fucked up big time. I had the only type of pancreatic cancer that's treatable. All I needed was a fairly simple surgery called the Whipple Procedure, but ...

MARTY

You “thought different.”

JOBS

I walk my talk. (beat) So I went to Mexico for an herbal bowel cleansing. The people there sedated me and stuck a cactus-mint douche up my Silicon Valley ass, and when I woke up I couldn’t remember a thing -- except that the Cosby Show was on in the background.

MARTY

Did you ever have the Whipple Procedure?

JOBS

Eventually, but by then the cancer had spread to my liver.

MARTY

In 2009, you underwent a liver transplant in Memphis at Methodist University Hospital.

JOBS

During the donor screening process, I learned that I had the same rare blood type as Tim Cook.

MARTY

Your CEO?

JOBS

Apparently, you can remove a portion of a liver and it’ll regenerate -- so Tim offered me a portion of his liver.

MARTY

And you turned him down?

JOBS

I played it off by saying, "Does it come with fava beans and a good Chianti?" (beat) But seriously, I didn't want a liver that had had so much semen pass through it. I'm funny that way.

MARTY

After you died, Tim Cook announced to the world that he was gay.

JOBS

Like it was such a big secret. Once you swallow a dick word gets around fast.

MARTY

Yum yum.

JOBS

Exactly.

MARTY

So you resigned on August 24, 2011 and died at home on October 5th. According to your official biographer, Walter Isaacson, your final words were, "Oh wow, oh wow, oh wow..."

JOBS

I had it arranged that at the exact moment of my death, my wife would yank a daisy chain out of my ass like she was starting a lawn mower. I came and went at the same time.

MARTY

Were you really worth $8.3 billion at the time of your death?

JOBS

I'm definitely the richest man in the cemetery. Just look around you. My neighbors are David Packard and Shirley Temple and Tennessee Ernie Ford. Even the guy who invented the transistor is here. Talk about networking.

MARTY

At least you have intelligent neighbors. Are you aware that after you died, Apple, Microsoft and Disney all flew their flags at half-staff?

JOBS

It was my idea.

MARTY

Was it also your idea to give each guest at your funeral a small brown box which contained "The Autobiography of a Yogi" by Paramahansa Yogananda?

JOBS

You get serious points for being able to pronounce that

motherfucker's name. (beat) Yes, it was my parting joke. I'm sure they all thought they were getting the new iPad - what a let-down.

MARTY

I read not long ago that your wife Laurene Powell-Jobs stops in from time to time at the Apple offices, and that she visits your office, which is not only still there but was left in the same condition as it was when you worked there -- including the nameplate on your desk. Is that true?

JOBS

Yes, it is. (beat) You know, I missed only one business meeting in my entire life, and that was to go to dinner with Laurene. I was giving a "View from the Top" lecture at Stanford, she was sitting in the front row and from that moment on we were never apart.

MARTY

That's true love.

JOBS

Laurene was everything to me. We were married for twenty blissful years and she held my hand when I died.

MARTY

I thought she was yanking a daisy chain from your ass.

JOBS

She was multi-tasking. Anyway, I wrote her a love letter for our 20th anniversary -- and gave it to her at the same

hotel where we got married.

MARTY

That's very sweet.

JOBS

I remember it by heart: "We didn't know much about each other twenty years ago. We were guided by our intuition; you swept me off my feet. It was snowing when we got married at the Ahwahnee Hotel. Years past, kids came, good times, hard times, but never bad times. Our love and respect has endured and grown. We've been through so much together and here we are, right back where we started 20 years ago -- older, wiser -- with wrinkles on our faces and hearts. We now know many of life's joys, sufferings, secrets and wonders, and we're still here together. My feet have never returned to the ground."

MARTY

That's beautiful.

JOBS

Well, her feet haven't returned to the ground, either. (beat) Turns out the love of my life was at a Houston education conference in 2011 and met this black dude, Adrian Fenty, who was the Mayor of Washington, D.C. Well, the guy's married but little cocksucker that he is, he hits on my wife and the next thing you know, he files for divorce from his own wife and butta bing, butta boom.

MARTY

They started seeing each other?

JOBS

You ever look out into the ocean and see those oil platforms?

MARTY

Sure.

JOBS

My wife's getting drilled like that. And old Adrian has 8.3 billion reasons to keep that erection going strong.

MARTY

I think it's up to fourteen billion. She made some good investments. (beat) So your wife was attending a lecture you were giving, and then met this married guy during a lecture she was giving?

JOBS

Funny how life works.

MARTY

One final caller. Charles Salmore from Santa Monica, California, what's on your mind?

SALMORE

Mr. Jobs, we all owe you so much gratitude. You made our world a better place to live.

JOBS

That's very kind of you, sir.

SALMORE

Really, how you could have accomplished so much after being dumped by your real parents...I mean, in the 56 years you were on this earth, you co-founded Apple, Pixar, and obtained a mind-boggling 342 design patents. So, my question has two parts -- are you still wearing the Issey Miyake black turtleneck you wore to the office every day?

JOBS

And the New Balance sneakers, don't forget them. Yes, I am.

SALMORE

And the second part of my question is this: Do you think what's happening right now as we speak has anything to do with karma and the way you abused everybody around you, including your daughter Lisa, her mother Chrisann, all the Apple employees including your "best friend" Steve Wozniak...how you refer to PCs as dog shit and the people who buy them as losers...and how on top of everything else you have the nerve to pretend to be a Zen Buddhist?

JOBS

What do you mean by saying "what's happening right now as we speak?"

SALMORE

I have a tech buddy who knows your wife Laurene and her boy toy, Adrian. And I'm told that as one of the many and I mean many sex games they play, they both wear black

turtlenecks and rip them off each other every day. Then jungle boy yells, "Think different!" as he drills your widow "Mrs. Jobs" deep in the ass with his BBC -- and I don't mean the British Broadcasting Corporation.

(INSERT: SOUND of electric drill and woman's moans of pleasure through end of show]

JOBS

Ummmmm. Ummmm. Ummmmm.

SALMORE

What goes around comes around. And I love your stupid quotes: "Don't let the noise of other's opinions drown out your own inner voice!"

JOBS

Ummmmm. Ummmmm. Ummmmm.

SALMORE

"Stay hungry! Stay foolish!"

JOBS

Ummmmm. Ummmmm. Ummmmm.

SALMORE

"The ones who are crazy enough to change the world are the ones who do!"

JOBS

Ummmmm. Ummmmm. Ummmmm.

SALMORE

You piece of shit asshole motherfucker!

JOBS

Ummmmm. Ummmmm. Ummmmm.

(Host looks at the camera]

MARTY

It appears that Steve Jobs has gone into Zen mode.

[ADD SOUND of Jobs crying: “She took all my money, she took all my money, she took all my money, she took all my money...” Plus a woman moaning and an electric drill]

MARTY (Cont’d)

[over Jobs’ cries]

Michael S. Rosenwald of the Washington Post said, “Jobs was charming, loathsome, lovable, obsessive, and maddening.” I think this may all be true. Thanks for joining us today. We’ll see you again soon on the next episode of “Over My Dead Body.”

CUT TO:

[Roll End Credits]

FADE OUT.

"MAE WEST: WHEN I'M BAD, I'M BETTER!"

(Episode 4)

FADE IN:

INT. CYPRESS HILLS NATIONAL CEMETERY - CYPRESS HILLS ABBEY - DAY

[Host is seated in the OMDB.TV director's chair in front of Mae West's grave]

NIKKI

Hi, I'm Nikki Gold and I'll be hosting the next episode of "Over My Dead Body" from the Cypress Hills National Cemetery in Brooklyn, New York. We'll be talking to screen legend Mae West who will share with us some

highlights from her amazing life.

MAE

My life is still amazing. (beat) Would you mind turning that switch on for me, dearie?

NIKKI

This one?

[Host presses a red button on top of the table. We hear a buzzing sound]

MAE

Yes, thank you, that's much better.

NIKKI

What did I just do? What's this connected to...?

MAE

I'll tell you later, just give me a minute.

NIKKI

Mae West, up close and very personal, coming up.

DISSOLVE TO:

[Opening Animated Credits & Theme Music]

CUT TO:

EXT. CYPRESS HILLS NATIONAL CEMETERY – ENTRANCE - DAY

[Host stands at the cemetery entrance and looks directly at the camera]

NIKKI

Hello, I'm Nikki Gold. Welcome to a very special episode of "Over My Dead Body" -- the only talk show that brings to life the most interesting and compelling people from our history and culture. Today, we've traveled to Brooklyn, New York and, more specifically, to the Cypress Hills National Cemetery where our amazing guest is now living. I'm talking about the one and only Mae West, who has agreed to be interviewed for the first time since her death in 1980. Come on, let's see what's on her mind.

[Nikki exits stage right]

CUT TO:

INT. CYPRESS HILLS NATIONAL CEMETERY - CYPRESS HILLS ABBEY - DAY

[Nikki sits down and gets herself situated in the OMDB.TV director's chair in front of Mae West's grave]

NIKKI

I'd like to welcome you to the show. What a pleasure it is to have you here, Miss West.

MAE

Speak for yourself, honey. I wouldn't go so far as to call being here pleasure...and I know pleasure.

NIKKI

Of course. (beat) There are a lot of young people watching this show with no idea who you are, which is hard to believe since the American Film Institute has you ranked at number fifteen on their list of greatest screen legends of all time. Plus, you've always been one of my idols.

MAE

Trust me, they'll know who I am twenty minutes from now.

NIKKI

Would you mind telling our viewers a little about your childhood, your family, growing up...

MAE

I suppose we should get that out of the way before we get to the meat of the matter. I'm a Brooklyn girl. My father started out as a prize fighter, which may be why I liked sleeping with boxers and not briefs. My mom was a corset and fashion model. I also had a sister and brother, both of whom wanted to be me.

NIKKI

Sibling rivalry?

MAE

It wasn't much of a fight.

NIKKI

Were you always drawn to show business?

MAE

I craved attention like any child and figured out how to get it at an early age.

NIKKI

According to Wikipedia, your first performance was at age five, at a church social, and at seven you won local talent contests.

MAE

If you've got it, flaunt it.

NIKKI

In 1911, at the age of eighteen, you were cast in a Broadway show called "Vera Violeta" with Al Jolson, is that correct?

MAE

Yes, and in 1918 the Shubert Brothers cast me in a musical with Ed Wynn and I got to Shimmie.

NIKKI

You popularized the Shimmie?

MAE

I did my best. But to be honest, Nikki, these were bit parts going nowhere. So in 1926, I decided to write and produce

my own plays from that point on, because I couldn't get arrested when it came to landing a decent role on stage.

NIKKI

According to the press, the first play you wrote was called "Sex" and the authorities raided the theater, arrested you along with the other cast members and prosecuted you guys on morals charges.

MAE

I finally got arrested on Broadway. It was my dream come true.

NIKKI

Did you go to jail?

MAE

I had the option to pay a $500 fine or serve ten days in jail, and I chose jail because I knew the publicity would be good for ticket sales.

NIKKI

Not much has changed in ninety years.

MAE

The warden called me into his office and we had dinner together. Then he gave me two days off for "good behavior." Ten minutes for two days -- I like the math involved in that.

NIKKI

It says you were charged with "corrupting the morals of youth."

MAE

I never corrupted anyone's morals. I may have interrupted them at times.

NIKKI

What got you to Hollywood and into the movies?

MAE

I wrote a play in 1928 called "Diamond Lil" that was a big hit. It became my persona for the rest of my life.

NIKKI

Paramount Pictures offered you a motion picture contract despite your being 39 years old -- where you essentially played the "Diamond Lil" character -- a sexually secure, intelligent, liberated woman.

MAE

It wasn't acting, I was just being myself. I lost my virginity at 13 and had sex at least once a day for the rest of my life. I've always believed that an orgasm a day keeps the doctor away...or at bay, if you're in bed with the doctor.

NIKKI

Can you tell our viewers a little about your movie career?

MAE

I was in "Night After Night" in 1932 with George Raft. They let me rewrite my own scenes -- so when the hat-check girl said, "Goodness, what beautiful diamonds," I replied, "Goodness had nothing to do with it, dearie." That became my second most famous line, after "Why don't you come up and see me sometime."

NIKKI

And your next movie literally saved Paramount from bankruptcy.

MAE

It was called "She Done Him Wrong." I pretty much took my "Diamond Lil" character and renamed her Lady Lou. Then, I saw Cary Grant in the parking lot, got him the lead, and the film grossed over $2 million -- the equivalent of $140 million today. That's when they named a building on the lot after me.

NIKKI

After that there was "I'm No Angel" and in 1933 you were the largest box-office draw as well as the highest-paid woman in the country.

MAE

Only one person in America made more money than me at the time, and that was William Randolph Hearst -- who wanted to marry me if I could assure him I'd remain faithful. I said, "Give me thirty minutes to think it over,"

and then went off and slept with his chef.

NIKKI

But technically you were already married.

MAE

If you could call it that. I'd kept that a secret for years. I got married at eighteen to a guy named Frank something --

NIKKI

Frank Wallace.

MAE

Sounds familiar. I don't even remember why I did it, but after two weeks of being a wife, I would go out at night for hours at a time -- so I guess you could say marriage wasn't the institution for me.

NIKKI

How long did you stay married?

MAE

Until 1943 -- that's 32 very happy years. Of course, we only lived together a few weeks.

NIKKI

Did you have fun in Hollywood?

MAE

I stayed in the same apartment for 48 years -- if those walls could talk...

NIKKI

Did you bring many lovers there?

MAE

Honey, let's just say if you wrote their names on the wall it would put the Vietnam Memorial to shame.

NIKKI

I read that every room in your home was covered in mirrors, including the ceiling.

MAE

I like to see where I'm going and where I've been.

NIKKI

The late movie critic Roger Ebert wrote that you were the first woman to write and star in your own movies.

MAE

That's correct. I appeared in thirteen movies, wrote nine of them myself, and rewrote the other four. Eventually I was banned from movies, then TV, and even radio -- so I went back to the stage and performed in nightclubs.

NIKKI

Did all that controversy bother you?

MAE

What got me into the entertainment business was pushing the envelope. So no, it wasn't much of a bother.

NIKKI

[holds up book] In this biography, it says that in 1937 you were put on a list of actors called Box Office Poison -- along with Greta Garbo, Joan Crawford, Marlene Dietrich, Fred Astaire, Delores del Rio, Katharine Hepburn and Kay Francis.

MAE

Everybody on that list was an independent woman, including Fred Astaire, and this frightened people. But David O. Selznick offered me a part in "Gone With The Wind," anyway.

NIKKI

As Scarlett O'Hara?

MAE

No, as a madam, Belle Watling -- the only woman to truly understand Rhett Butler. This was after Tallulah Bankhead turned down the role.

NIKKI

And you didn't take it?

MAE

I said, "Mr. Selznick, I refuse to accept Tallulah's sloppy seconds."

NIKKI

And while all this was going on you uttered your third most famous line.

MAE

"Is that a gun in your pocket, or are you just happy to see me?"

NIKKI

Like many people, I've always admired your one-liners. I think we each have our favorite.

MAE

And what's your favorite, Nikki?

NIKKI

(like Mae West) "I feel like a million tonight. But one at a time."

MAE

"It's not the men in your life that matters, it's the life in your men."

NIKKI

(like Mae West) "I used to be Snow White, but I drifted."

MAE

"I only like two kinds of men, domestic and imported."

NIKKI

(like Mae West) "I've been in more laps than a napkin."

MAE

"When I'm good, I'm very good. When I'm bad, I'm better."

NIKKI

Miss West, what's your favorite line?

MAE

"A man's kiss is his signature."

NIKKI

That's beautiful.

MAE

I could order a cup of coffee and people would search for a double meaning.

NIKKI

Did you really turn down the Beatles when they wanted your picture on their album cover?

MAE

They wanted to put my picture on an album called Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band. I told them I wanted nothing to do with a lonely hearts club -- but they wrote me a nice note and all of them signed it, so I changed my mind.

NIKKI

In 1959, you published your autobiography, "Goodness Had Nothing To Do With It," which became an instant best-seller.

MAE

That got me back into television until CBS kicked me off the air for putting a nude statue of myself on the piano. Five years later, I made a comeback in an episode of "Mr. Ed." I think the producers cast me because I once played Catherine the Great.

NIKKI

Was that fun?

MAE

Mr. Ed was the only leading man I didn't sleep with -- although I thought about it. He had everything you'd want in a leading man -- he was witty, funny and hung like a horse.

NIKKI

I understand there have been some very notable men in your life.

MAE

They're notable, Nikki, because I made notes after being with them. I've always said if a woman keeps a diary, it will someday keep her.

NIKKI

We have Liz Berman from Park City, Utah on the line.

MAE

Hello Liz.

LIZ

Hi, Miss West. Can you tell me the favorite leading man you've ever worked with, and why? And who are your favorite female stars of today?

MAE

Aside from Mr. Ed, George Raft was my favorite. We worked together on my first film and my last. George didn't mind me stealing every scene. He said it was like watching a cat burglar at work. And yes, of course I slept with him. (beat) Female stars today? I like Julia Roberts for her role in "Erin Brokovich." And I think Reese Witherspoon is kinda cute. But if you're looking for a hot woman on screen, just watch one of my old movies.

NIKKI

I understand that you met Marilyn Monroe at a dinner party and made her blush in front of the guests. What did you say?

MAE

She was married to Joe DiMaggio at the time and I said to her, "Honey, the only difference between us is that you settled for one ball player and I prefer the whole team."

NIKKI

When you first moved to Hollywood, you began dating an African-American boxer named William Jones.

MAE

He was a great kisser and could pummel his opponents to pieces.

NIKKI

Did you guys live together?

MAE

For a while we did. In fact, the landlord at Ravenswood, that was the name of my building, refused to let him stay overnight because of his race. So I bought the building and evicted the landlord.

NIKKI

What became of Mr. Jones?

MAE

He wanted to get married. I let him know he was a good boxer but not good enough for that fight.

NIKKI

Forgive me, but I'm curious to know if these Double-A batteries are yours?

MAE

I have the most loyal and adorable fans. They leave batteries when they visit because they know how fast I go through them -- need I say more?

NIKKI

I think we understand. In 1970, you told Dick Cavett that you purposely put racy lines into your scripts so that the censors would have something to take out, and so the less racy ones would seem tame by comparison.

MAE

That way I could keep some of my lines in the movie.

NIKKI

Did you enjoy your interview with Dick Cavett?

MAE

God, no. He reminded me of an English schoolboy who just discovered his pee-pee but had no idea what to do with it. All he did was giggle the entire time. How he got into Yale is a mystery.

NIKKI

Shawn Rozett from Richmond, Virginia, say hello to the incomparable Mae West.

SHAWN

Thank you for taking my call. I've seen all your movies and read a lot about you, and I want to know -- what's the most romantic thing a man has ever said to you?

MAE

Well let me tell you, Shawn. John Wayne once walked over to my table in a restaurant and said, "My face leaves

in thirty minutes. Be on it."

NIKKI

Things like that must have made your boyfriends jealous.

MAE

They were all jealous, but let me tell you, Nikki, I had one in particular -- James Timony. He was also my manager for many years, and in 1948 when we were on the road doing a revival of "Diamond Lil," his hotel room was directly across the hall from mine.

NIKKI

You stayed in separate rooms?

MAE

It was the "respectable" thing to do in those days. Jim would just stare through the keyhole to see if anybody entered my room. So I made it a point to go to Jim's room before retiring for the night, and while I was there, my "man of the hour" would let himself into my room with the extra key I'd given him earlier.

NIKKI

Did you ever get caught?

MAE

No, but during the play's run I snagged a high-heel in the carpet and broke my ankle. The doctor said I'd be on my back for three months, but I wasn't too worried. I hired a male nurse from London to care for me, and my manager

couldn't understand why every time he walked past my room I'd be yelling, "The British are coming!"

NIKKI

Troy Nelson from Philadelphia, PA has a question for Mae West.

TROY

Miss West, it's an absolute honor.

MAE

I realize that. What can I do for you, Troy?

TROY

I have a photo of you in a light blue dress that I've been jacking off to for years and I just wanted to thank you. My question is: how do you keep your skin so silky and shiny -- I mean, do you let your partner come on your face?

MAE

That's disgusting, Troy. If you want to know my little trade secret, I have given myself enemas every morning for decades. They keep my skin smooth and I smell sweet from both ends. I'll also take an enema before filming a close-up.

NIKKI

How does it work?

MAE

There's tube behind the table which attaches to a plastic

container filled with saline solution. It puts my colon in quite a tizzy.

[Nikki lifts an enema contraption from behind the table]

NIKKI

This makes your skin smooth and silky?

MAE

It's a miracle. I don't know what I'd do without it. As a matter of fact, I was going to ask if you would be so kind as to squeeze the plastic container because I don't know when one of my fans will stop by next.

[Nikki squeezes the container]

NIKKI

Absolutely.

MAE

But not yet, honey. Wait until the interview is over. Otherwise there will be quite a mess in about three minutes.

[Nikki's face says it all]

NIKKI

(changing subject) So...are you working on anything now?

MAE

Just a book about my past lovers.

NIKKI

You wouldn't...

MAE

It's called "When One Inch Equals A Thousand Miles" -- that's the working title, and it features Frank Wallace and Paul Novak and Steve Rossi and Jack La Rue and Gary Cooper and Max Baer and George Raft and Victor McLaglen and Anthony Quinn and David Niven and Bugsy Siegel and Joe Louis and Steve Cochran and Duke Ellington and Abel Baer and Liberace, to name a few.

NIKKI

I thought Liberace was gay.

MAE

He was when I got done with him.

NIKKI

Tell me about Paul Novak.

MAE

He was darling. There was a slight age difference -- we met when I was 62 and he was 32, then lived together for 26 years. I died in his arms...many times. He was with me to the end.

NIKKI

Wasn't he a former Mr. California?

MAE

Yes. Then he was a muscleman in the chorus. Paul Novak was the love of my life.

NIKKI

Mae, we have a teenage girl on the line, Catherine Sheahan from Melbourne, Australia.

CATHERINE

Hi, Miss West.

MAE

What can I do for you, my dear?

CATHERINE

I was wondering, if you had a daughter, what advice would you give her?

MAE

The same as I'll give you. Always demand to be treated with respect as a lady, no matter what you may have done the night before. And use condoms.

CATHERINE

Also, would you ever consider running for office? It sure seems that America could use your help right now.

MAE

I do think sex in the White House is a vital part of good government. Just look how well things were going while

Jack Kennedy and Bill Clinton were in office. (beat) Come to think of it, maybe I'll declare my candidacy right away.

NIKKI

Sixty-seven years after your stage debut, and after a 27-year absence from movies, along came "Myra Breckinridge."

MAE

That movie turned out to be my swan song. It put me right back on the map.

NIKKI

What do you think of the entertainment industry today versus when you were working, say, for Paramount?

MAE

I get tired of seeing all the CGI stuff and green-screen effects in most films today. I'm an organic kind of gal. In my day, what you saw was what you got.

NIKKI

What do you think women today are looking for?

MAE

The same thing as always. And another thing. What's so great about that movie "Fifty Shades of Grey?" That's nothin.' Try doing all 245 positions of the Kama Sutra. That'll get your heart pumpin.'

NIKKI

That's a good point, but you weren't dependent on a man.

MAE

I was dependent on many men, usually at 2 a.m. -- and at other times as well.

NIKKI

You've appeared on numerous talk shows over the years. I'm curious to know if you've been asked to do any lately?

MAE

Not a day goes by without my agent getting a talk show request. Last month, Jimmy Kimmel and Jimmy Fallon -- I call them the Two Jiminies -- wanted me as a guest. And Conan the latent homosexual has asked me to appear on his show many times. And just this morning, I received an invitation from "The View."

NIKKI

Do you watch "The View?"

MAE

Only when I tune in by mistake. Who wants to be on a show with a bunch of gossiping, middle-aged ladies? I've got better things to do.

NIKKI

You have a point.

MAE

Now being on “The Bachelorette” would be much better. By the time I got done with all those men, the show would’ve lasted eight seasons.

NIKKI

Well, we’re very flattered that you chose our show.

MAE

It’s been a pleasure, Nikki. I feel I can let my guard down with you.

NIKKI

That’s so sweet. (beat) Who is the real Mae West?

MAE

You’re talking to her. Being me isn’t for everyone, but it provided my family and I with an exciting and full life.

NIKKI

Do you have any regrets? Is there anything in your life that you’d do differently?

MAE

I’ve always said, “You only live once, but if you do it right, once is enough.” But it would’ve been nice to live in the age of, say...

NIKKI

The internet?

MAE

I was thinking more of Viagra. (beat) You sure you didn't squeeze that enema?

[Nikki reacts, but ignores her]

NIKKI

(forces a smile -- but...RELAX!) It's such an honor to be here with you. Do you have any final thoughts for our viewers?

MAE

I was the first truly liberated woman in America. No man was going to get the best of me -- that's what I wrote all my scripts about.

NIKKI

(RELAX) This has been fun. I'm really going to miss you.

MAE

Come back and see me sometime.

NIKKI

Thank you, Mae West.

[Mae West makes hard grunting sounds like she's shitting in her grave. Nikki turns toward camera]

NIKKI (Cont'd)

And thank all of you for joining me today. We'll see you again soon on the next episode of "Over My Dead Body."

CUT TO:

INT. CYPRESS HILLS NATIONAL CEMETERY - HALLWAY - DAY

[Long shot of empty mausoleum hallway in front of Mae West's grave]

MAE

Uhhhh!!!

CUT TO:

[Roll End Credits]

FADE OUT.

“Richard Nixon: Tricky Dick”

(Episode 5)

FADE IN:

EXT. NIXON PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY - GARDEN GRAVESITE - DAY

[Host sits on OMDB.TV chair by Nixon headstone]

HOST

Hello, I’m George Fear, coming to you from Yorba Linda, California -- location of Richard Nixon’s birthplace and final resting spot for this week’s episode of “Over My Dead Body.” Normally our guests aren’t buried next to a library.

NIXON

It's better than a jail cell.

HOST

Well, true. You almost didn't get a library.

NIXON

Hell, I should have a library in every state in the country for what I've accomplished -- including being the only president to visit all fifty states. Hey, is this being taped?

HOST

Of course.

NIXON

I have a thing about being recorded.

HOST

I've heard. What exactly happened with all those missing minutes?

NIXON

They weren't missing, I just wasn't talking. I was playing pocket pool if you want to know the truth. There's not a lot of alone time as president. Plus, Pat wasn't putting out.

HOST

Seriously?

NIXON

My shrink said it would be a good stress reliever.

HOST

I see.

NIXON

I was under a lot of stress then.

HOST

All of America was, too.

NIXON

Then there must have been a lot of people playing with themselves -- I know the damn hippies were --

HOST

[to camera] The infamous 37th President of the United States, Richard Milhous Nixon, coming right up.

DISSOLVE TO:

[Opening Animated Credits & Theme Music]

CUT TO:

EXT. GARDEN GRAVESITE - NIXON LIBRARY - DAY

[Host is already seated in the OMDB.TV director's chair]

HOST

[to camera] Richard Milhous Nixon is one of the most well-known American politicians of the 20th Century. But he is also one of the most controversial. So, how much do we really know or understand about the 37th President of the United States? From the end of World War II, until his resignation from the presidency in 1974, he became one of the world's most famous heroes -- but also one of the most vilified. However, it's never really been clear as to how this all happened. So today, let's ask him. [turns toward headstone] Welcome to "Over My Dead Body," Mr. President.

NIXON

Nice to be here.

HOST

Thank you for taking the time to do this show.

NIXON

Not a problem. At least this time I don't have to worry about a sweaty face.

HOST

You're obviously referring to your appearance on national TV when debating John F. Kennedy. In fact, it's been deemed the cause of your loss in the 1960 election. It was the closest popular-vote margin of the 20th century.

NIXON

Yeah, that was crappy. No one knew it at the time, but I had a bad flu and fever, and refused make-up because I knew the press would accuse me of trying to upstage that damn good-looking Kennedy. My gray suit was the wrong color and I got lost in the background, while he stood out perfectly. Then those TV assholes used close-ups when I responded to the questions, and all folks remember is that I looked sweaty and uncomfortable.

HOST

Polls at the time revealed television audiences felt you lost the debate, but radio audiences thought you beat Kennedy clearly.

NIXON

I want a do-over.

HOST

For the next few years, JFK jokingly referred to you as "Old Sweaty Face."

NIXON

Well, at least I have a face.

HOST

According to one of the many biographies on your life, you play five musical instruments, and you serenaded your wife Pat when you first met by playing the piano.

NIXON

True, true. And later that night, I showed her my flute.

HOST

You mean clarinet?

NIXON

That, too.

HOST

So, what's this I hear about your drinking?

NIXON

Hell yes, I was a lush and a two-pump chump. Three drinks was my max, then I'd be out like a light.

HOST

It's been written that you were passed out during the perilous Apollo 13 flight back home.

NIXON

Could have been.

HOST

You don't remember?

NIXON

Nope. I was also out during the Arab-Israeli War. Ravaged by more than four years of war in Vietnam, fifteen months of Watergate investigations and countless nights of intense insomnia. My boy Kissinger covered for me, though. I was

either drinking or jacking off.

HOST

Perhaps at this juncture, Mr. President, you can give us a bit on your history before the presidency?

NIXON

Sure. People may be surprised to know that I was born to Quaker parents. Second of five kids. Guess I get my sex-drive from Pops. Anyway, as a teenager my old man Frank, aka Francis, was a gas station owner and grocer. He made me get up at 4 a.m. every day and drive the family truck into Los Angeles to buy vegetables at the market. Then he'd make me wash and display them exactly the right way or else I'd get a whippin'. My mother, Hannah, pretty much ran the family while taking care of my brother Harold who was always sick.

HOST

Was your mother strict?

NIXON

Hell hath no fury like a Quaker woman who catches her son looking at dirty magazines with a sock on his penis. But what I really hated was how at seven years old she'd make me practice the piano for an hour every day. Yet, later in life, when I was President, I jammed with Duke Ellington at the Grand Ole Opry.

HOST

In high school, you ran for student body president, but lost.

NIXON

My first election. It was rigged. Dumb jock. I swear he was a communist. But screw all that. I graduated second in my class and was accepted at Harvard.

HOST

Impressive.

NIXON

But my family couldn't afford it -- my old man was a cheap-ass.

HOST

I read it was because of your brother's medical bills.

NIXON

Didn't do him any good. He died from tuberculosis anyway.

HOST

That's rough.

NIXON

Not really. I just went to Whittier College, then got a full ride to Duke Law.

HOST

I meant the death of your brother.

NIXON

Oh.

HOST

On another note, you graduated from Duke third in your class. But instead of working in some big city law firm you headed back to California and your hometown of Whittier to work at a local law firm. Why?

NIXON

I wanted to be an FBI agent, but after I applied, I never heard back from them. I learned years later that I'd been hired, but my appointment was canceled at the last minute due to budget cuts. Stupid morons couldn't even send me a letter. It's fine. If I hadn't gone back, I'd never have met my wife.

HOST

How so?

NIXON

On a whim, I tried out for a local play at the community theater. I made the cut, and Pat made it as well.

HOST

Do you remember the name of the play?

NIXON

"Dark Shadows." I was pretty much hammered the whole time, but I remember it was something about witches and

zombies. Good practice for politics. I learned a lot doing that play.

HOST

So, Mr. President, is it true that Pat at first thought you were a stalker and refused your advances?

NIXON

One man's stalker is another man's romantic. She was just playing hard to get. On our third date, I told her I was going to marry her.

HOST

What did she say?

NIXON

She just laughed. After that, I wrote her a shitload of poems to get her to change her mind.

HOST

In fact, I have one here. [reads from paper] You wrote: "And when the wind blows and the rains fall and the sun shines through the clouds, nothing so fine ever happened to him as falling in love with thee, my sweetest heart."

NIXON

That's the one that got her.

HOST

How did she react?

NIXON

She gave me a blowjob.

HOST

After you married in 1940, did you immediately join the Navy?

NIXON

Yes. I could've gotten a draft waiver due to my Quaker affiliation, or faked bone spurs, but I had to do my duty. Made Lieutenant Commander, but never saw combat. Really just a pencil pusher.

HOST

What came after the Navy?

NIXON

These Republican guys from my hometown said I had the spunk to run for Congress.

HOST

This was at the height of McCarthyism?

NIXON

Yep. It's amazing what can happen simply by calling everyone a communist. That's how I won, beating the pants off that democrat Voorhis. Once in the House, I joined up with the Committee of Un-American Activities and got to cross-examine Alger Hiss the Soviet spy. Made my name on that pinko, and then went on to beat Helen

Douglas by planting rumors about her being a Red lover.

HOST

That's how you got the nickname Tricky Dick?

NIXON

Actually, I got that from a group of college girls I hooked up with, but it carried over to my political career. In fact, I was so tricky that Eisenhower picked me as his running mate in 1952 and we won.

HOST

But first you had to give the famous "Checker's Speech." What was that all about?

NIXON

Had to save face for Eisenhower who was going to drop me from the ticket like a hot potato. God damn press kept writing about a slush fund...not illegal, but it didn't look clean. So I went on national TV and admitted to the fund and said I bought my kids a dog with the money so how bad could it be and please don't take the puppy away. I thought the speech was a total failure, but the people bought it and Eisenhower said, "You're my boy" and we went on to kick ass 442 to 89.

HOST

How was it being V.P.?

NIXON

Like watching paint dry. That was until the old man had a

stroke and heart attack -- one after another. From that point on, I was more the prez than him and it led to the 25th Amendment. In fact, I led the Senate in passing one of the first Civil Rights bills. I also got to travel a lot, which was fun.

HOST

What happened in Latin America?

NIXON

The anti-American bastards stoned and spit on my limo.

HOST

Mr. President, would you mind taking a few calls from our viewers?

NIXON

Of course not.

HOST

Darren from Santa Barbara, welcome to the show.

DARREN (CALLER #1)

Hey, Mr. President.

NIXON

Hello, Darren. Santa Barbara's a nice town. Do you live anywhere near Oprah?

DARREN (CALLER #1)

She lives right down the street, but we never see her.

Anyway, when I was a senior in high school, our social studies teacher played the entire Watergate hearings for the class and made us take notes.

NIXON

I'm sorry.

DARREN (CALLER #1)

And to this day, I'm not sure who was the bigger cocksucker, you or my social studies teacher.

NIXON

Well let me just say, don't underestimate yourself, sir. My guess is that you suck a pretty mean cock. Say hi to Oprah.

HOST

[changes subject] Why don't you tell us a bit about the so-called Kitchen Debate with Khrushchev.

NIXON

You mean Soviet leader Khrushchev?

HOST

Sure.

NIXON

He was a pussy! I definitely won that one. That drunk-ass leader couldn't formulate an argument if he tried. When I showed him some new American color television sets, he lost it. He made fun of Congress and then sneered at the TVs, claiming his country would have the same sort of

gadgets within a few years.

HOST

What did you say?

NIXON

We went at it for a while. I thought we were headed for nuclear war right then, but he calmed down. A lot of people said I did good job standing up to him.

HOST

After that is when the Republican Party nominated you to run against Kennedy.

NIXON

We know how that went.

HOST

By the way, do you know who killed JFK?

NIXON

Of course. I hate to break it to Oliver Stone, but Aristotle O'Nassis orchestrated the whole thing. Kennedy's wife was tired of his philandering and met O'Nassis at a White House party. While JFK was busy hitting on some bimbo, Ari walked over to her and said, "If I kill the motherfucker for you, will you have sex with me?" And she answered, "If you kill him, I'll marry you." Before you know it, Jack's brains were fertilizing the grassy knoll and O'Nassis had a young bride.

HOST

So backing up a bit, after Kennedy was sworn in as president, what did you do?

NIXON

After that loss, I said fuck it to politics and wrote a book called *The Six Crises*.

HOST

Was it a bestseller?

NIXON

Yes sir, and because it was, I got talked into running for California governor against that space-cadet, pot-smoking Brown.

HOST

After you lost to Brown, you famously remarked, "You won't have Dick Nixon to kick around anymore." What did you mean by that?

NIXON

Crummy bastards in the press. That loss messed with my head. Pat and I fled to New York to work for an international law firm.

HOST

That's where you became very informed on foreign policy and five years later, you ran for president against Hubert Humphrey, with Agnew as your running mate. This time

you won on the platform of honorable peace in Vietnam. The margin of victory was pretty slim.

NIXON

Humphrey was a homo-commie-loving lunatic, plus his boss President Johnson should've ended the war sooner. It assured my victory, thank you very much.

HOST

Most people thought you'd be a do-nothing President. But you accomplished a lot.

NIXON

Thank you for bringing that up, George. For a talk show host, you're not bad. We took on welfare reform, civil rights, environmental issues and law enforcement.

HOST

In fact, you set in motion supplemental social security disability payments, automatic inflation-rate increases for social security, affirmative action percentages for minorities, and you also signed the *War on Cancer* One Hundred Million-Dollar Funding.

NIXON

I also signed into law the desegregation of schools, created OSHA and the EPA, and signed the Title IX civil rights bill prohibiting gender bias at colleges.

HOST

That's very impressive, Mr. President.

NIXON

Money went a lot further then.

HOST

True, but you still had some issues -- like hyper-inflation and Vietnam. Can you please explain what exactly was your secret plan to end the war?

NIXON

Simple, really. I thought it prudent to let the people of Vietnam fight their own fight. We'd support them, but they'd do the combat role -- you know, like die for their country rather than our boys.

HOST

But then you resumed the bombing stopped by Johnson -- you even expanded it to Laos and Cambodia.

NIXON

Those little bastards were hard to kill -- I mean, bring to the negotiating table.

HOST

America went berserk. What do you have to say about the Kent State riots?

NIXON

The National Guard needed more target practice. Seriously, two thousand protesters and they only hit thirteen?

HOST

Really?

NIXON

Damn straight! Hippy-homo-pinkos aren't people. They're just communists waiting to happen. Anyway, my boy Kissinger ended the war, finally.

HOST

You and Kissinger were also responsible for the so-called Ping-Pong Diplomacy with China, which opened the door for talks and trade with the communist country for the first time in twenty-one years.

NIXON

Nothing better than a few friendly games of beer pong to get some up-tight Asians to see things my way.

HOST

Didn't the Americans get beat handily?

NIXON

Those sneaky bastards filled our cups with rice wine. That shit will knock out an elephant. Before we left, I got a hot shave and a hump from Suzie Wong. And the relationship with China that came about caused the Russians to agree to "Détente" and sign the nuclear reduction treaties. Made the world a safer place if you ask me, and I got to squirt my juice.

HOST

All that helped you get reelected in 1972 when you beat McGovern in one of the biggest landslide victories in the history of the United States.

NIXON

520 to 17, baby. He turned gay after that.

HOST

So...it's not clear why Watergate had to happen.

NIXON

Oh God...are you really going to go there?

HOST

It's part of our history, Mr. President.

NIXON

So are pet rocks. Look, it all started because those sneaky Dems were up to something with the press. They made me do it!

HOST

So you formed a group called CREEP?

NIXON

Committee to Reelect the President. Thought of that myself.

HOST

Interesting name.

NIXON

They were nothing compared to the Plumbers.

HOST

Ah yes, the illegal secret police you created to counteract any leak -- like the one involving the Pentagon papers, where they broke into the office of Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist and leaked his personal file to the press.

NIXON

You sure do know a lot. Are you CIA?

HOST

No.

NIXON

FBI?

HOST

Sorry. You at first denied having anything to do with Watergate.

NIXON

It wasn't a denial. I just didn't want to accept the truth of it. Just ask John Dean.

HOST

That would be your White House counsel. He ended up testifying against you, Mr. President. Said you had him cover up the break-in. And yet, he recently told "60

Minutes" that Donald Trump is far worse than you ever were.

NIXON

How comforting. Having John Dean in your corner is like learning you have a tapeworm.

HOST

All this led to the discovery of the tapes which you made, but you refused to turn them over to the Special Counsel. In fact, you ordered them burned.

NIXON

I was on medication at the time.

HOST

You had quite an eclectic team of people around you back then. John Dean, G. Gordon Libby, E. Howard Hunt, Jeb Magruder, James McCord, Edwin Meese...all very bright people...but on the surface they had nothing in common.

NIXON

They had <u>one</u> thing in common. They can all suck my dick.

HOST

And then there was Deep Throat.

NIXON

My favorite alone-time movie.

HOST

I'm referring to the FBI source who gave the *Washington Post* all their information.

NIXON

Woodward and Bernstein got it from the FBI?

HOST

He revealed himself in 2005. Mark Felt, Associate Director of the FBI.

NIXON

I need a drink.

HOST

The Supreme Court ruled you had to release the tapes and at the same time, the House Judiciary Committee voted three articles of impeachment.

NIXON

I had a bad day.

HOST

The transcripts revealed that you wanted to block the FBI's investigation into Watergate. You resigned right after that.

NIXON

You're a god damn buzzkill.

HOST

The tapes also showed you did not like African Americans, the LGBTQ communities and certain religious groups.

NIXON

Meaning...?

HOST

Blacks, Homosexuals and Jews.

NIXON

Okay. Busted.

HOST

Emily from Tucson, say hello to Richard Nixon.

EMILY (CALLER #2)

[stoned] Mr. President, you once said, “Every one of the bastards that are out for legalizing marijuana should die.” Well, how do you feel that many states have now legalized it?

NIXON

You’re kidding?

EMILY (CALLER #2)

Ten states and rising every day.

NIXON

Holy mother of God. That’s the end of America.

EMILY (CALLER #2)

Oh, and my husband wants to know about political contributions.

NIXON

In what way?

EMILY (CALLER #2)

How deep into a political candidate do the big donors really get? Do they have much influence?

NIXON

Well let me just say, if it were possible, we'd all be pregnant.

HOST

Floyd from Arkansas, go ahead.

FLOYD (CALLER #3)

Yes, Mr. Nixon? Big fan...

NIXON

Thank you, Floyd.

FLOYD (CALLER #3)

Ever since I was a little kid, I'd watch people on TV who would imitate you. Some were good, some were not. I though David Frye was pretty good, and of course Rich Little got all the attention. So my question is, how did you feel about being imitated so much?

NIXON

That's an excellent question, Floyd. Well, they do say imitation is the sincerest form of flattery. But I want you to know, I think an ill-spirited imitation is improper. Hey, would you like to hear my Rich Little imitation?

FLOYD (CALLER #3)

Absolutely!

NIXON

[in different voice] Hi, I'm Rich Little, the world-famous imitator. When I'm not making fun of the president on television or in Las Vegas, I stay home and play with my two-inch weenie.

FLOYD (CALLER #3)

Ha. That's pretty good. Also, I thought your appearance on Laugh-In was hilarious. Can you say, "Sock it to me?"

NIXON

Of course, "Sock it to me."

HOST

I also read that one of your nicknames is Gloomy Gus. Some say that's because of your overall demeanor, but others say it's because for a time you made the mornings in America a bit darker.

NIXON

All because in '73 I wanted to save fuel during the Energy

Crisis and signed into law year-round Daylight Savings Time.

HOST

Kids ended up waiting for their school buses in pitch black, and there was a constant fear they were going to get hit by traffic.

NIXON

I said just give ‘em flashlights, which went over like a lead balloon. You win some, you lose some.

HOST

Speaking of which, I read that you had a three-lane bowling alley built in the White House.

NIXON

Absolutely great stress reliever, almost better than whacking it. Incidentally, I had my staff paint the faces of my enemies on the pins and then knock the crap out of them. I bowled a lot...I had a lot of enemies.

HOST

You’re joking.

NIXON

[video of split conversion] I once took out Khrushchev, Woodward and Bernstein on a 6-7-10 split.

HOST

I heard you were pretty good.

NIXON

My high score was 232.

HOST

So Mr. President, with that score in mind, how do you explain being practically the best at everything, but then having to resign the presidency?

NIXON

My dad wasn't around to whip me.

HOST

In truth sir, your terms weren't failures at all.

NIXON

Tell that to Woodward and Bernstein.

HOST

We have time for one more call. Angela from Minnesota, you're on live with Richard Nixon.

ANGELA (CALLER #4)

Hi, Mr. President. I have a two-part question.

NIXON

Fortunately for you, I can multi-task.

ANGELA (CALLER #4)

Why do presidents get involved in sex scandals? And what do you think of Donald Trump?

NIXON

Those are very good questions, Angela. And it's a subject to which I've afforded careful analysis. I've concluded that presidential sex appears to involve blowjobs almost entirely. JFK and his brother Robert are well-known for getting blown pretty much everywhere they went. Plus, they both had regular sex with Marilyn Monroe.

ANGELA (CALLER #4)

I saw that on the Discovery Channel.

NIXON

This spilled over to their other brother Ted, who was getting his sausage smoked as he drove off a bridge.

ANGELA (CALLER #4)

I see.

NIXON

Fast forward to JFK's son, John, Junior. He got his knob polished in the private plane he was flying, and took his wife and sister-in-law on a nosedive into the Atlantic.

ANGELA (CALLER #4)

I guess you could say everybody went down that day.

NIXON

That's correct. And of course, Bill Clinton got impeached for getting gummed by his intern. A shot heard round the world.

ANGELA (CALLER #4)

When you put it all together like that, it makes me not trust anybody in public office.

NIXON

Well let me just say, in their defense, Angela, public office is stressful, and you need to blow off steam at regular intervals. The First Lady can only handle so much, and often she's out of town, or we are, and getting oral sex within the marriage may not be a viable option. Incidentally, she's under a lot of stress as well, and has her own support staff, if you know what I mean.

ANGELA (CALLER #4)

So is President Trump doing the same thing?

NIXON

I doubt it, he looks pretty wound up. Maybe Kellyanne Conway will step up to the plate. Or Nancy Pelosi for a bipartisan effort.

HOST

Mr. President, are you aware that Donald Trump once employed a political consultant with a large tattoo of your face on his back?

NIXON

Of course, that would be Roger Stone, or as I call him, Daddy's little girl. I understand he's headed to prison. Guess I'll soon be part of a threesome.

HOST

Martin Luther King once said, “Richard Nixon would wear a suit and tie to the beach.” Did you two get along?

NIXON

Martin was jealous of what I was wearing because he couldn’t keep his clothes on. He cheated on his wife more than every other president combined -- and still he got a federal holiday and a postage stamp.

HOST

If by some chance you were in the Oval Office today and in charge of things, what would you do?

NIXON

I’d pour myself a scotch, watch old movies, and let Congress kill each other.

HOST

The Library of Congress lists 278 books written about you. Do you have a favorite?

NIXON

You have it right there. [Host picks up book] My memoir.

HOST

[reading] Christopher Lehmann-Haupt of the New York Times calls “R.N.” the best presidential autobiography ever.

NIXON

Plus it has a catchy title.

HOST

[opens book] We're almost out of time, but on page 273 you talk about an interview you gave Ms. Magazine in 1971. Would you share with our viewers what you said when asked about women's lib?

NIXON

Sure. I said I had nothing against women's lib, but I wouldn't want to wake up next to a female pipe fitter.

HOST

Nice. Any last words, Mr. President?

NIXON

I am not a crook.

HOST

Thank you very much for your time, sir. [turns to camera] That's it from the Nixon Library in Yorba Linda, California. I'm George Fear, and we'll see you again soon on the next episode of "Over My Dead Body."

CUT TO:

[Roll End Credits]

FADE OUT.

“Julia Child: Bon Appetit!”

(Episode 6)

FADE IN:

EXT. PHILADELPHIA STREET - DAY

A video of a limousine driving down Market Street in Center City Philadelphia.

INT. LIMO - SAME

Inside the limo is Julia Child’s cookie jar on the backseat.

BACK TO SCENE

The limo comes to a stop in front of --

EXT. PHILLYCAM BUILDING - DAY

To establish.

INT. PHILLYCAM - HALLWAY - DAY

Julia Child's cookie jar is carried down the hallway toward the studio.

ANOTHER ANGLE

CLOSE-UP - On Air sign at the studio entrance.

HOST (V.O.)

[Timed to the above] One of the funniest, most entertaining TV personalities of all time would have to be Julia Child. We can remember her from childhood because our moms would watch her cooking show. But none of our moms actually made any of her complicated recipes, and if they did, it was a disaster. People tuned in because she was fun, and authentic, and had a vibrant personality that was infectious. And who could forget those quotes?!

INT. OMDB STUDIO - DAY

CLOSE on Julia's cookie jar.

JULIA

I love cooking with wine. Sometimes I even put it in the food!

ANOTHER ANGLE - WIDE SHOT

HOST

Don't you find it ironic that you were once a famous chef, known especially for your deserts, and now your ashes are held in a cookie jar?

CHILD

Well, I hope they used plenty of butter!

HOST

[To camera] In our studio today, the French Chef herself, the insatiable Julia Child, coming right up.

DISSOLVE TO:

[Opening Animated Credits & Theme Music]

CUT TO:

INT. OMDB.TV STUDIO - DAY

[Host is seated in chair next to table. A cookie jar holding the ashes of Julia Child sits on a second chair]

HOST

[To camera] Hello, I'm Kristen Spangenberg, and welcome to "Over My Dead Body," the talk show that brings to life the most interesting people from our history and culture. There is so much more to the story of celebrity chef Julia Child than most people know. For example, she did not start cooking until age thirty-two. She was six foot two and played college basketball for Smith College. She was literally so tall they changed the rules of the game. She also once said about her marriage, "If my husband and

I could just have the kitchen and the bedroom, that would be all we need." Julia Child changed the way America cooks and thinks about food. So, let's meet the woman responsible for this phenomenon. [Turns to cookie jar] Hello Mrs. Child, welcome to the show.

CHILD

Thank you so much, Kristen. Glad to be here. And call me Julia.

HOST

Okay...Julia. First off, I'm curious to know, why did you wait so long to become a chef?

CHILD

I wished I'd started cooking at fourteen, but that wasn't in the cards. Girls of my class didn't cook -- there were servants to do that -- and they certainly didn't do it professionally. Back then, middle-class women didn't have careers. You were expected to marry and have kids and be a nice mother. You didn't go out and do anything.

HOST

That sucks.

CHILD

What's "*sucks*?"

HOST

It's colloquial for bad.

CHILD

Anyway, I never gave much thought to food. I made do with frozen meals. So, at thirty-two, after I met my husband Paul, I had to learn to cook to seduce him with my kitchen prowess.

HOST

Didn't you have an accident in the beginning?

CHILD

I exploded a duck and set the oven on fire.

HOST

No kidding. How did that happen?

CHILD

I was drunk as hell and my sauté was 100-proof alcohol.

HOST

What did you do?

CHILD

Got it on with the hubby, right on the kitchen counter.

HOST

Okay, so you two spent a lot of time in the kitchen.

CHILD

For us, the kitchen was the soul of our house. As you mentioned earlier, if we could just have had the kitchen and the bedroom, that would've been all we needed. But

the kitchen table sufficed in a pinch.

HOST

You married late in life. Why?

CHILD

Being six-foot-two with a horse face made finding a husband not easy. After I graduated from Smith College, I ended up in New York sharing an apartment with two friends, writing ad copy. I couldn't get a date if I paid for it. So I thought, hell, I'll join the Army, plenty of men in there.

HOST

What happened?

CHILD

Those imbeciles said I was too tall.

HOST

Is this the point in your life where you became a spy?

CHILD

[Laughs] A spy? That's rich! I volunteered my services to the Office of Strategic Services where I was a file clerk and typist, and then I helped develop shark repellent used on underwater explosives during WWII.

HOST

How did that come about?

CHILD

I was bored being a clerk. As a research assistant in the Secret Intelligence Division, I once typed ten thousand names on white note cards to keep track of officers. I was bored stiff and still hadn't been laid. The guys on the repellent team were cute and smart, so I signed up.

HOST

The repellent you cooked up was effective, correct?

CHILD

Cooked up? Ha, ha, I like that. Yes, it's still being used today by NASA to protect space capsules after they land in the ocean. It was actually the first thing I ever cooked.

HOST

Didn't you meet your husband in the OSS?

CHILD

Yes, ma'am! We met in China and eventually moved to Paris for his work. He took me to *La Couronne* restaurant and the sex we had after was oh la la. That started my love affair with French food. Paul loved highly spiced and garlicky dishes, and I'm never one to do things by half measures.

HOST

So, if the State Department had sent Paul to Rome instead of Paris, you would have taught us spaghetti instead of soufflés?

CHILD

Hell yes, but alas, it was French that won out. I enrolled in a professional cooking school -- the Cordon Bleu -- and then later studied privately with Max Bugnard and other master chefs. After that, I started a school of my own.

HOST

Boy, you certainly developed a passion for food.

CHILD

It was really about sex. If Paul thought the food was delicious then I'd get banged all night. But to answer your question, I had finally found a real and satisfying profession which kept me busy well into the year 2000.

HOST

You then set about writing a book that would make French cooking seem easy.

CHILD

In 1961, in one of the biggest blunders in publishing history, Houghton Mifflin rejected my book as "too formidable." It was a huge blow to me and Paul, because by that time Paul had left the State Department and we moved into our new house in Massachusetts with little money. I'd been working on *Mastering the Art of French Cooking* for nine years.

HOST

How did you survive?

CHILD

I did food porn -- worked wonders on cucumbers. In truth, I figured if I could give two cooking lessons a week at about forty bucks a shot, that would bring in a tidy sum.

HOST

Paul really went to work on your kitchen.

CHILD

Yes, he installed a used professional Garland stove and arranged my knives on magnetic strips so I could grab one without fishing through a drawer.

HOST

You had a thing for knives.

CHILD

It's very important that you train yourself with your knives. Once you've used it and washed it, you put it away. Kinda Freudian if you think about it.

HOST

You're an admitted knife-freak.

CHILD

I had dozens, most of them well used. But there's one I called my "fright knife." I love great big things. Ask Paul.

HOST

You would wave it around and slam the cutting board with it.

CHILD

Doing television, you want to do amusing things, something fun and unusual. I think also on the television you want to do things loud -- people love the whamming noises.

HOST

It was that instinct that got you on the air in the first place.

CHILD

Yes, I was invited to appear on a book review show called *I've Been Reading*.

HOST

I read that you showed up at the studio with a hot plate, some eggs and a giant whisk.

CHILD

Yep, just like a stripper going to a hotel. I am always prepared. I whipped up an omelet for the host who was shocked.

HOST

The audience begged for more, and over the next three years the station produced almost two hundred shows, turning you into a national icon.

CHILD

Of course. Not bad for a nymphomaniac with size twelve feet.

HOST

So maybe now is a good time for a little back story. Can you tell us about your humble beginnings?

CHILD

On August 15, 1912, I was born as Julia Carolyn McWilliams in Pasadena, California. My father was John McWilliams, Jr., a Princeton University graduate and prominent land manager. My mother was Julia Carolyn Weston, a paper-company heiress. My grandfather was Byron Curtis Weston, a lieutenant governor of Massachusetts. I was the eldest of three children. My brother was John McWilliams III, and my sister was Dorothy Cousins.

HOST

That's a huge Republican family.

CHILD

True, I was a rich Republican until I moved to New York and had to live off eighteen dollars-a-week. Then I became a Democrat.

HOST

You attended Polytechnic School from 4th to 9th grade. Then, in high school, you were sent to the Katherine Branson School in Ross, California, which was at the time a boarding school.

CHILD

I got to play tennis, golf, and basketball there. It was fun, but the other girls were mean. That's where horse face came in.

HOST

You then attended Smith College, where you graduated in 1934 with a major in History and Writing.

CHILD

I was officially a nerd.

HOST

You once described a meal of oysters, sole meunière, and fine wine as an opening up of the soul and spirit.

CHILD

And my legs. Oysters are an aphrodisiac you know.

HOST

Okay. Following the success of your book, you wrote magazine articles and had a regular column for *The Boston Globe*. Would you say you enjoy writing as much as cooking?

CHILD

Not really. You can't eat paper. However, I do like coming up with some zinger quotes.

HOST

Care to share any with our viewers?

CHILD

Sure. Here's a couple of them: A party without a cake is just a meeting. [Laughs] Here's another: It's so beautifully arranged on the plate -- you know someone's fingers have been all over it. [Again, the laughter] The only time to eat diet food is when you're waiting for the steak to cook.

HOST

I love those! Would you mind taking some calls from our viewers?

CHILD

Of course not. How exciting.

HOST

Caller one, go ahead. This is Mr. Kane from Philadelphia.

CALLER ONE

Mrs. Child, is it true that people have often mistaken you for a man? [Hangs up]

CHILD

He hung up before I could tell him to eat me.

HOST

Let's give this another try. We have a Mrs. Selvaggi from Wilmington, Delaware on the line. Go ahead.

CALLER TWO

Mrs. Child, how would you best describe yourself?

CHILD

I'm like Big Foot with a kitchen knife.

CALLER TWO

And also, if you were a food, what would you be?

CHILD

I love this caller! Well, I have to say it varies day to day. Some days I feel like a rump roast. Other days like a red snapper or baby oyster.

CALLER TWO

Yesterday, I woke up feeling like a cannoli.

CHILD

I get that way at times. Today I feel like lean ground chuck.

HOST

I read that *The French Chef* was immediately successful, ran nationally for ten years and won Peabody and Emmy Awards, including the first Emmy award for an educational program.

CHILD

I'm blushing.

HOST

And your show was the first to be captioned for the deaf. But because of the technology in the 1960s, the show was unedited, causing your screw ups and blunders to appear in the final version.

CHILD

Yep, plus I was always drunk by the end of the show.

HOST

It's what the audience liked about you.

CHILD

That I was a drunk horse face?

HOST

No. You were authentic -- believable. You were a bit controversial, though. Your use of ingredients like butter and cream has been questioned by food critics and modern-day nutritionists.

CHILD

But they have their place in the world. You ever see the movie *Last Tango in Paris*?

HOST

Yes.

CHILD

I rest my case. Brando got the idea from me. Anyway,

focusing too much on nutrition takes the pleasure from enjoying food. Everybody was overreacting. If fear of food continues, it will be the death of gastronomy in the United States. Fortunately, the French don't suffer from the same hysteria we do. We should enjoy food and have fun. It's one of the simplest and nicest pleasures in life. Sex and food until you die.

HOST

Your kitchen, designed by your husband, was the setting for three of your television shows. It's now on display at the Smithsonian. What do you think of that?

CHILD

What do they cook there?

HOST

Nothing. It's a museum.

CHILD

Such a waste. Have you been there?

HOST

Not yet. Your husband Paul Child, who was ten years older than you, died in 1994 after living in a nursing home for five years following a series of strokes.

CHILD

Do you think it was all that butter and cream?

HOST

I hope not. Looking back, what was the most attractive quality about your husband?

CHILD

Paul wasn't just my husband, he was my best friend. We were always together. We enjoyed each other immensely. But I have to say his best quality was that he was easy to talk to -- we had wonderful conversations. Paul really had a way would words. I called him my cunning linguist.

HOST

That's so sweet. After your death on August 13, 2004, just two days before your 92nd birthday, it was reported that your last meal was French onion soup.

CHILD

Best bowl of soup I have ever had. What's up with you and death?

HOST

You've been the subject of numerous parodies on television and radio programs and skits on stage. Most famously in a 1978 Saturday Night Live sketch by Dan Aykroyd, who, as Julia Child, cut his finger and eventually died while yelling out, "Save the liver."

CHILD

I loved that sketch so much I showed it to all my friends at parties. Dan Ackroyd is the shit.

HOST

In fact, you were parodied quite a bit over the years. First on *The Electric Company*, then on *The Cosby Show*, then John Candy portrayed you in a sketch for *Second City* where you fought Mr. Rogers in a boxing match. Even *Rupaul's Drag Race* featured you in an episode. How did you feel about all that?

CHILD

My favorite was still Dan Ackroyd.

HOST

Meryl Streep played you in a movie, *Julie and Julia*. She was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Actress.

CHILD

Who is that?

HOST

A famous actress.

CHILD

Does she have a horse face?

HOST

That's a matter of opinion.

CHILD

I'll take that as a yes. When did the movie come out?

HOST

In 2009, five years after your death.

CHILD

How convenient. Guess they didn't want to stir the pot. God I'm funny.

HOST

Would you mind taking one more call?

CHILD

Of course not. I'm having a blast.

HOST

We have Karen from Sebastian, Florida on the line. Go ahead.

CALLER THREE

Hi Mrs. Child. I really miss you and your show. Things haven't been the same without you.

CHILD

I appreciate that, Karen.

CALLER THREE

I'm just wondering, what are the best foods for sex?

CHILD

Well that depends. There are two food groups. One to eat, and one to smear all over your partner and eat.

CALLER THREE

I see.

CHILD

The type to get you physically ready would be oysters, caviar, and of course, champagne. But a few drinks of almost anything alcoholic will do the trick. As for what to put on your partner, stick with crème brulee, you can lick that off of most anything and it'll taste great.

CALLER THREE

What if you don't like sweets?

CHILD

Bite your tongue! Well, you can eat pretty much anything with [imitates Hannibal Lechter] "some fava beans and a good Chianti."

HOST

Isn't escargot an aphrodisiac?

CHILD

For many people, yes. But some folks are just turned off by snails. Hey, would you like to hear my snail joke?

HOST

Of course.

CHILD

A man is getting ready to go to work one morning when

there's a knock at his front door. He opens it and no one is there. A few minutes later there's another knock, and again the man opens the door and nobody's there. But this time he looks down and sees a big ugly snail on the front porch, so he stoops downs and picks it up and chucks it as far as he can. Okay, Kristen, are you ready for the punch line?

HOST

I'm all ears.

CHILD

Okay, so three years later there's another knock at the front door. The man opens it and there on the porch is the snail who says, "Hey, what the hell did you do that for?"

HOST

Very funny. I hope he didn't eat it.

CHILD

Actually, there's only one thing more disgusting than snails and that's kale. It's like eating a tree.

HOST

It's popular these days.

CHILD

Even worse than the taste of kale is the smell of a kale fart.

HOST

If you could live your life again, would you do anything differently?

CHILD

Just one. I would buy stock in a kale farm.

HOST

My fiancé Brandon wants to know the most successful thing you made on your show, and the biggest flop.

CHILD

Ha! Tell Brandon they were the same item. It was a layer cake that fell apart. I scooped up a huge dollop of frosting and covered it all up. Voila! Parfait! Hey, I see you have a bunch of my roses!

HOST

Of course. We wanted to show our viewers these Julia Child roses. How did you feel about having a rose named after you?

CHILD

A very kind man named Tom Carruth bred this particular golden floribunda rose and asked if it could bear my name. I took one look at it and agreed.

HOST

In the U.K. it's known as the Absolutely Fabulous rose.

CHILD

As it should be! It's also called a golden butter rose, and you know how much I love butter.

HOST

It also requires only minimal pruning.

CHILD

If only I were so lucky.

HOST

They're beautiful. Are you working on anything now? A new cookbook, perhaps?

CHILD

I'm actually working on a spy novel.

HOST

Really? What's it about?

CHILD

It's called *The Sweet-Tooth Detective*. It features a pastry chef named Meredith who solves cold-case crimes from her French bakery along with her daughter, Fiona, who's a sex therapist.

HOST

I'll keep an eye out for it. This has been a lot of fun, Julia. Do you have any final thoughts or advice for our viewers?

CHILD

I always say, if it feels good, do it. If it tastes good, eat it. And sometimes, if you get lucky, those are the same thing.

HOST

[TO CAMERA] That's it for today. I'm Kristen Spangenberg, and we'll see you again soon on the next episode of "Over My Dead Body."

CUT TO:

[Roll End Credits]

FADE OUT.

“TUPAC SHAKUR: TUPAC IS BACK”

(Episode 7)

FADE IN:

EXT. PEACE GARDEN PARK AMPHITHEATER - DAY

[Host sits in the OMDB.TV chair in front of a wall plaque with the name Tupac Shakur on it]

MELISSA

Hello, I’m Melissa Pollack coming at you from the Peace

Garden Park Amphitheater in Stone Mountain, Georgia for this week's episode of "Over My Dead Body." We usually conduct our interviews in a cemetery, but with Tupac Shakur we're dealing with unusual circumstances.

TUPAC

Hey, I can't help it if they cremated me. I was too young to be writing my will.

MELISSA

We're just happy we were able to find you. Rumor has it your ashes were spread over the Pacific Ocean, or in your mother's garden in Georgia, or smoked up by your hip-hop group The Outlawz.

TUPAC

None of the above. Although some people think they took my lyrics from "Black Jesus" literally. (rapping) Last wishes, niggas smoke my ashes. Ha.

MELISSA

The iconic Tupac Shakur, coming up.

DISSOLVE TO:

[Opening Animated Credits & Theme Music]

CUT TO:

EXT. PEACE GARDEN PARK AMPHITHEATER - DAY

[Host is already seated in the OMDB.TV director's chair]

MELISSA

So here we are at the formerly known Tupac Amaru Shakur Center for the Performing Arts, now known as the Peace Garden Park Amphitheater. I'm not sure why the name was changed, but rumor has it that some of our guest's ashes have been spread right here.

TUPAC

Wassup, homie? And where's my statue?

MELISSA

According to TMZ the new one is on the way.

TUPAC

I hope they bolt it down this time. The other one's probably listed on e-bay.

MELISSA

Tupac, it's really a pleasure to meet you. Thanks for fitting us into your busy schedule.

TUPAC

No problem.

MELISSA

You might not know this, but you have lived an equally prolific life dead as you did when you were alive. In 2002, you were named one of the top-earning dead celebrities, you're the first hologram to perform at Coachella, and you still manage to put out platinum-selling albums since your death in 1996.

TUPAC

I try.

MELISSA

There was even a Broadway musical called “Holler if Ya Hear Me” in which your music was used.

TUPAC

How did it do?

MELISSA

It closed after 38 performances.

TUPAC

You win some and you lose some.

MELISSA

Now I know who you are, but can you give our viewers a little backstory about your upbringing?

TUPAC

No problem. I was born in 1971 and grew up in East Harlem. My birth name was Lesane Parish Crooks, but my mom changed it to Tupac Amaru the Second, after an Incan chief who got executed. That turned out to be ironic.

MELISSA

Your mom sounds like she was an activist.

TUPAC

Yeah, my momz was an active member of the Black

Panthers in the Sixties and Seventies. I was in her stomach when she was in jail fighting a charge that the Black Panthers were conspiring to blow up buildings in New York.

MELISSA

They actually believed your mom was a bomber?

TUPAC

Yep. You got to remember, the government felt the Panthers were detrimental to society. J. Edgar Hoover ran the FBI and was a racist motha fucka, even though it turned out he was wearing a matching bra and panties. Anyway, the police showed up and treated my momz like shit.

MELISSA

NPR ran a documentary that stated your mother was a strong, intellectual woman and that she acted as her own attorney without ever having been to law school.

TUPAC

That's correct. She represented herself day in and day out for eight months, all while she was pregnant with me, and she was acquitted. Her activism and focus taught me to be community oriented and to analyze society, which later on went into my music.

MELISSA

And at some point you moved to Baltimore?

TUPAC

Yes, when I was fifteen my mom, sister and brother moved there and Momz got me into the Baltimore School for the Arts.

MELISSA

The same high school as Jada Pinkett-Smith?

TUPAC

Same one. Look, man, Jada is still my heart. She was my closest friend my whole life. I even wrote poetry for her, although she never heard it until after I died.

MELISSA

The poem called "Jada."

TUPAC

I see you put two and two together there. "You are the omega of my heart, the foundation of my conception of love. When I think of what a woman should be, it's you that I first think of."

MELISSA

That's beautiful.

TUPAC

No it's not. No wonder I never hit that. I'm not exactly Maya Angelou when it comes to poetry.

MELISSA

So you didn't date Jada?

TUPAC

We tried but there was no electricity. Hard to believe since she was so fine. But our connection was pure. It was spiritual. Although I'll admit I jacked off to her picture every night of my life and still do.

MELISSA

Even now...?

TUPAC

Is this morning recent enough?

MELISSA

That's impressive. Now, when did you move to California?

TUPAC

In 1988, when I was 17 we moved to Marin County. I performed in all my high school productions but then had to drop out because of my mom's drug habits. But that led to my meeting Leila Steinberg. I started taking her poetry classes. She organized my first concert with my group at the time, Strictly Dope. After that night I got signed and traveled with the hip-hop group Digital Underground.

MELISSA

Man, I used to listen to them all the time back in the day.

TUPAC

The first song I did with them was “Same Song” on the “Nothing But Trouble’ soundtrack, where I made my film debut. The following year is when I released my first album, “2pacalypse Now.”

MELISSA

In the Nineties, a lot of people would say that your music was labeled as gangsta rap. Do you agree?

TUPAC

Would you have considered Marlon Brando a gangsta actor? No. He’s an actor. Same with Axl Rose, they’re not gangsta rock and rollers, they’re just rock and rollers. I’m a rapper, that’s what I do as an artist.

MELISSA

Many rappers today like Eminem, The Game and Nas said that “2pacalypse” inspired them. Even though the album didn’t create waves in the beginning, there was some controversy surrounding it because of your topics with the police.

TUPAC

Funny thing is that I never had a prison record until my first single, “Trapped.” They arrested me because I was jaywalking. Just minding my own business. Then they beat the hell out of me. I sued them for ten million and settled for $42,000.

MELISSA

They should've paid you the ten million.

TUPAC

Like the rest of my family, there was always issues with the cops. In 1993, two drunk cops shot at my car in Atlanta.

MELISSA

That's right. Then they tried to lie about it.

TUPAC

Then Dan Quayle started criticizing my album after some kid's defense attorney said his client shot a state trooper because he was influenced by my first album. All I wanted to do was rap about things that affected young black males, and I ended up being the media's kicking post for all of them.

MELISSA

Some would say you inspired the Black Lives Matter movement by pointing out police aggression within the black community.

TUPAC

I'm proud that I inspired protest against police officers who target brown and black bruthas and sistas. Changes still need to me made.

MELISSA

Besides police brutality, what other topics did you talk about in your music?

TUPAC

Ironically, my first song was about gun control. A friend of mine was shot and killed and that's what started my music career. I also had songs that dealt with poverty, unemployment, poor education, disunity and violence, black on black crime, crack addiction and even teenage pregnancy like in my song, "Brenda's Got a Baby."

MELISSA

And you also starred in a movie?

TUPAC

That kinda just happened. I showed up to support my Digital Underground band mate Money-B, but the producers let me audition. Then we all went to dinner to see if we clicked as a group and on the ride home with the producer, I ended up arguing with the cab driver. I think that sealed the deal on my playing Bishop in "Juice."

MELISSA

Ha! What were you arguing about?

TUPAC

We were going back and forth about why cab drivers don't pick up black people. I almost punched the guy, but felt that would only succeed in making his point. They even

used some of my own words from that argument in the movie to make my character more authentic.

MELISSA

And “Juice” was a hit.

TUPAC

That’s when people took notice of my music and my albums started to sell. So you can trace my success to an argument I had with a racist mo fucker in a taxicab. Ha!

MELISSA

Then came your second album.

TUPAC

It was called “Strictly For My Niggaz” and as soon as I dropped it I sold two million copies.

MELISSA

Tupac, our switchboard is on fire, would you mind taking a few calls?

TUPAC

Not at all.

MELISSA

We have Iesha from Los Angeles on the line.

IESHA

Oh my God, Pac! I knew you weren’t dead! I swear I saw you just last week on Long Beach Boulevard.

TUPAC

That wasn't me, Iesha.

IESHA

Well, y'all were talking about my favorite album, "Strictly," which has my favorite song of all time on it, "Keep Ya Head Up." Damn that song got me through some tough times, and oooh and I also loved "I Get Around" and "Holler If Ya Hear Me."

MELISSA

And your question for Mr. Shakur is...?

IESHA

I just felt like he wrote that album for me, especially "Keep Ya Head Up." When I was raising my son on my own up in Harlem, his music made it easier to get through the day. Like we was struggling to make due for rent. Your words meant the world to me.

TUPAC

Well that's why I said [rapping "Keep Ya Head Up"] the blacker the berry, the sweeter the juice, I say the darker the flesh then the deeper the roots, I give a holler to my sisters on welfare, Tupac cares, if nobody else don't care, and uh, I know they like to beat ya down a lot, when you come around the block bruthas clown a lot, but please don't cry, dry your eyes, never let up, forgive but don't forget, girl keep ya head up.

IESHA

I just came three times.

TUPAC

That's my girl.

MELISSA

Hey Tupac, what was it like to work with Janet Jackson?

TUPAC

We worked on "Poetic Justice" in 1993 and yeah, she was great, she was a natural playing a home girl. I got the role that every man in America wanted -- to kiss Ms. Janet Jackson. I was so excited, I even practiced with thirty wads of bubble gum. As soon as we did it I was like cut, no way, let's do it again.

MELISSA

The scene at the beauty salon?

TUPAC

Yeah.

IESHA

Eeee, I love that scene.

MELISSA

All right, Iesha, thanks for calling.

IESHA

Hold up, I want to give a shout out to my cousins, Latrice,

Shangey, and my girl Didi and...[call cuts with a click and goes to a dial tone]

MELISSA

Is it really true that she asked you to take an AIDS test while shooting that movie?

TUPAC

Yeah, that bullshit happened, but I don't know if that came from Janet or her boyfriend or her team. They wanted me to take an AIDS test for the love scene. I told them if I get to have sex with Janet I'll take whatever test they want, I'll even donate a kidney, but if it's just a Hollywood love scene then I ain't taking no test.

MELISSA

That's embarrassing.

TUPAC

Tell me about it. But she got a taste of poetic justice when Justin Timberlake popped her boobs out at the Super Bowl.

MELISSA

Kyle from Chicago, say hello to Tupac Shakur.

KYLE

[Jamaican accent] Ayo Pac, which one of your islands are you hiding out on right now?

MELISSA

He's dead, Kyle.

TUPAC

It's cool, I'm used to it.

KYLE

I want to know when did you and Biggie start having a beef with each other?

TUPAC

Look, me and Biggie were tight at one point. I obsessed over his first single "Party and Bullshit." I mean, me and my posse thought he was a dope rapper. We became close after I invited him and his group over to my house in California. He always slept on my couch whenever he came to visit, which is why I had to take precautionary measures.

MELISSA

And what exactly did you do for him?

TUPAC

I trained him. Biggie was my lieutenant. I used to tell him, if you want to make your money you have to rap for the women, do not rap for the bruthas. The women will buy your albums and the bruthas will want what they want.

KYLE

Now weren't you dating Madonna around this time?

TUPAC

Who wasn't dating Madonna in the Nineties? It was good for a while, but I had to break it off with her.

MELISSA

You dumped Madonna?

TUPAC

Yup. Come to think of it, I should've asked her to take an AIDS test.

MELISSA

Also in '93 you were filming "Above the Rim."

KYLE

And that's when the beef started?

TUPAC

Yeah. When I got the part of Birdie -- he was an east coast drug dealer. I wanted to study men who I felt played the role in real life. That's when I met Haitian Jack and Jimmy "Henchman" Rosemond -- two drug dealing music executives who promised to hold me down in New York. I considered them dead men walking after the way they handled the crazy accusations by that girl I brought to the hotel.

MELISSA

What happened, Pac?

TUPAC

I met this girl partying at Nell's in Manhattan. We started messing around on the dance floor, then I took her to my hotel that night. Four days later, she comes back to my hotel with my entourage being there, including Haitian Jack. She gave me a massage in my bedroom, then left me. I fell asleep and the next thing you know, I wake up to her screaming rape. I did nothing to her, but they convicted me of first-degree sexual abuse.

MELISSA

Did anyone else get charged?

TUPAC

No. It was because of my name and what I represented in the public view, which was an outlaw mentality. So they felt if they could punish me, then they could punish other people not as brave as I am, and nobody would speak out against society.

MELISSA

You should've hung out with Stormy Daniels, it would've only cost you a hundred and thirty grand.

TUPAC

True. I didn't even get a spanking. So I had to go back to the studio to make some quick money. I had lawyers to pay, plus my extended family. It seems I was supporting everybody. Jimmy Henchman invited me to the studio in Times Square to do a cameo verse for $7,000. Biggie and

Puffy were upstairs recording as well. When my crew and I got to the lobby, these two black dudes in Army fatigues pulled out a nine-millimeter and tried to steal my jewels. I resisted and ended up getting shot five times.

MELISSA

I don't know how you survived that, Pac.

TUPAC

Well, I don't know either. Although 50-cent got shot nine times and the nigga still out there selling smart water.

MELISSA

So there you are, laying on the floor in the recording studio.

TUPAC

I ended up playing possum until they left, then dragged myself to the elevator. When the doors opened, Puffy, Biggie and Henchman were standing there, looking surprised and guilty. In the ambulance, all I could think about was that a couple of bruthas had shot me. I never thought a black person would do that, like I was their representative. Anyway, the next day I had to go back to court to be sentenced for the bogus rape.

MELISSA

You went to court the very next day?

TUPAC

I had to show the judge it wasn't some fake publicity stunt.

But honestly, I knew my fate because the judge didn't look at me or my lawyer once during the entire case.

MELISSA

And...?

TUPAC

I was sentenced to eighteen months in a maximum-security prison in upstate New York. At this point I was broke. Prison was killing my spirit. I was in solitary confinement for the first eight months and about to quit the music business. But then, while I was alone in that cell, my album hit Number One and it woke me up again.

MELISSA

Which made you the only artist in history with a Number One album while in prison.

TUPAC

Even Tommy Lee couldn't pull that off. Yeah, "Me Against the World." There was a song on that album called "Dear Mama" that I wrote for my mom, and also for Jada's mother, because both had struggled with drug addiction and I felt I owed my mom something deep. She was my homie. I mean, we went through our stages where first we were mother and son, then it was drill sergeant and cadet, and then it was like dictator and little country. So "Me Against the World" was my favorite album.

MELISSA

Even rappers today like J. Cole and Kendrick Lamar cite this album as one of their favorites. I wonder what Jada's husband, Will Smith, thought about it. Having started as a rapper and all.

TUPAC

Will Smith ain't no rapper, unless you think Donny Osmond is a rapper. Or Kanye West at this point, that lame-ass bitch. Plus it turns out that old Will wanted to have an open marriage with Jada. So she opened the door and left.

MELISSA

Ouch!

TUPAC

You know, as I sat there in prison, what really got me fired up was when I started hearing rumors that it was one of Biggie's boys who gunned me down. He owed me more than to just turn his head and act like he didn't know who I was.

MELISSA

We have another caller.

TUPAC

Go for it.

JOE-NATHAN

Hey, Tupac, my name is Joe-Nathan Jackson the Third from Greenwich, Connecticut. I've been in love with the rapping music since I was a child. I wanted to know, who were some of your special lady friends, or honeys, as you would say?

TUPAC

Since you bring it up, Madonna was real nice, she's a good person who helped me out like a homeboy, although my homies didn't massage my nuts with baby oil while suckin' my dick and she certainly did that. And actresses like Jasmine Guy and Rosie Perez were good supporters, and Jada Smith like I said earlier. But my best friend I'd have to say was my wife, because when I was in jail she reached out to Suge Knight to help me pay for everything.

MELISSA

Hold up, you were married? Why is this the first time I'm hearing about it?

JOE-NATHAN

I knew about it.

MELISSA

Tupac, how long were you and your wife together?

TUPAC

Look, we were only married for ten months right before I went to jail. Sancho showed up and she got it annulled a

month before I got out. I married her for the wrong reasons and I'll just leave it at that.

MELISSA

Who's Sancho?

TUPAC

Ha! Sancho is the name of every guy who shows up when a guy goes to prison. It's an inside joke. Sancho takes good care of the woman, then disappears on the day her man is released.

MELISSA

Got it. And you said you reached out to Suge Knight when you were incarcerated?

TUPAC

I wasn't trusting anybody at this point, but Suge was there and had my back when he came to visit me in prison. I agreed to join his Death Row Records and told him, "I need you to ride with me because I'm going to destroy Puff Daddy's Bad Boy Records. I believe they had something to do with having me shot." So Suge pledged his loyalty to me, but I had to make three albums for them. The rest is history.

JOE-NATHAN

But I read in 2011, a prisoner in New York named Dexter Isaac claimed that he was the one who shot you.

TUPAC

That's what was said, but I don't believe it.

JOE-NATHAN

Hey, one more thing. I read that you once had a bit part on a Cosby episode. What was it like working with Bill Cosby. Was he a nice guy?

TUPAC

He was to me. Very pleasant guy as far as I can recall, but my memory of Bill faded immediately after we worked together, not sure why.

JOE-NATHAN

Ha. Did you hear about all the trouble he's in now?

TUPAC

Of course, who doesn't know about all that?

JOE-NATHAN

I'm sure being convicted was a bitter pill for him to swallow.

MELISSA

Thanks, Joe-Nathan. (then) Tupac, are you aware that Bill Cosby once said that black people need to pull their pants up, put their hats on straight and learn to speak English? Do you have any thoughts on that statement?

TUPAC

Well, sure I have thoughts on it. Have you ever seen a metal lid on a trash can?

MELISSA

Of course.

TUPAC

Well, when he gets to prison, Bill Cosby's gonna need to strap one of those to his ass!

MELISSA

Getting back to your music, "All Eyes On Me" was the last album you would release while you were alive. Why did you choose that title?

TUPAC

Because that's how I felt it was. I got the police and the feds watching me. I had females that wanted to charge me with false shit and sue me, I got the jealous homeboys and I got the homies that rolled with me. So all eyes on me. It was the first double-disc rap album.

MELISSA

I remember it well. Okay, we have Carla Jones from Baltimore on the line.

CARLA

Tupac, I want to know, how is it you're dead but you keep putting out new albums and singles like every other year?

TUPAC

That's because after I got out of prison, I was recording at least three songs a day. I recorded 150 songs in my last year alone.

CARLA

Wow. How is that possible?

TUPAC

Because that's what you're supposed to do as a rapper. I felt that rappers who could not perform their verses on the first try weren't ready to be rappers.

MELISSA

So all in all, how many albums did you make?

TUPAC

I made eleven albums, seven of which were released after my death. And so far, I've sold over 75 million copies. And if you really want to know something, check this out -- last year I made $9 million more than Eminem and 50-Cent. And my favorite drink is Hennessey on the rocks.

CARLA

Did you really sleep with Faith Evans, Biggie Smalls' wife, as retaliation like you said in your diss track, "Hit 'em Up?"

TUPAC

Ha! She says it never happened but I hit that bitch like a

snow plow at the Denver Airport. Just check out the birthmark on her left thigh -- waaaay up there. The truth is, Biggie was really pretty small.

CARLA

Oh, and what did you think of Snoop Dogg?

TUPAC

At one point we were friends. Hell, I was the one who gave Snoop his first blunt, but we had a falling out because he wanted me to get over hating on Biggie and rise above it.

MELISSA

He wanted you to get over hating on the guy who had you shot?

TUPAC

Yeah, but I'm funny that way, I wasn't about to get over it. I did let Snoop's wife give me a blowjob, which was world-class, by the way.

CARLA

Oh, Tupac!

TUPAC

Oh, Carla!

CARLA

Oh, I almost forgot, can you tell me why you changed the name of your publishing company?

TUPAC

Absolutely. There was a wonderful little boy named Joshua Torres. He was 11-years-old, and his mom called into a radio station because her son had muscular dystrophy and was about to die. She told the host it was her son's only dream in life to speak with me. Well the station contacted my manager and fifteen minutes later I called Joshua. He didn't have long. So I hopped on a jet in New York and flew to Aberdeen, Maryland and paid him a surprise visit. He was really depressed, but we had a great visit and rapped together and he started laughing and singing and his eyes lit up. Two hours after I left he passed away. That's when I renamed my publishing company Joshua's Dream. I loved that kid.

CARLA

That's so sweet, Tupac.

MELISSA

It seems that despite everything you had to go through, life was good.

TUPAC

It sure was. Up until that little trip to Las Vegas on September 7, 1996. Suge took me to the Mike Tyson fight.

MELISSA

Yes. You and Suge were in his BMW. He was driving and according to the police, a vehicle pulled up beside you and shots were fired and both of you got hit.

TUPAC

Well I got hit four times and he got hit once. Yeah, everybody thinks they were after me, or that Suge set me up, but the truth is they were after him, but I got killed. Not right away, though. Lucky me, I got to be in a hospital for six long days before I died. My momz and my fiancé Kidada were by my side. But that didn't stop Suge and Death Row from releasing my next album a month after I was gone.

MELISSA

They wanted to make money, no doubt.

TUPAC

Always. But I died broke and in debt to Death Row and Suge Knight.

MELISSA

You must be aware that Suge is in the L.A. County Jail right now, up on murder charges for running a guy over with his SUV. Is there anything you'd like to say to him now?

TUPAC

Yes. Hey Suge, I hope you're healthy up in there, 'cause I want you to get celled up with Bill Cosby. He'll give you a blue Tylenol. Thanks for nothin' dude.

MELISSA

We have time for one more caller.

CAMERON

Hey Tupac, my name is Cameron from Santa Barbara, and I just wanted to say thank you for all the great music you gave the world. Fortunately, your mom was able to get ownership of your music back from Suge Knight and Death Row Records.

TUPAC

Yes she did. My momz proved in court they defrauded me. Then she took the money and opened the Tupac Amaru Shakur Center for the Arts in 1997. We help young artists in poverty to express themselves. Like I told you, my momz was a real fighter.

CAMERON

Do you have any regrets in your life?

TUPAC

Like the Sinatra song, yeah, regrets, I've had a few. Not marrying Jada would be my biggest regret. Going to that hotel with a crazy woman who accused me of rape is up there. And at the top of the list would be getting in that car with Suge. And maybe "Forrest Gump."

MELISSA

What about "Forrest Gump?"

TUPAC

I got to audition for the part of Bubba, the shrimp guy. Had I done better, I would've gotten the part.

MELISSA

I never read about that. You would've made a good Bubba, I think.

TUPAC

And not the type of Bubba that Suge Kight and Bill Cosby are gonna meet. Ha. And my tattoo, I don't think I would get that again.

CAMERON

The one across your stomach that says "Thug Life?"

TUPAC

It was an impulsive decision. I take more time to think these days.

MELISSA

Are you happy with the movies that have been made about you?

TUPAC

Not really. "All Eyez On Me" was okay, and Demetrius Shipp, Jr. -- the actor who played me -- did his best with what he was given. Was it a great movie? No. Did they get all the facts right about my life? Hell, no. But that's Hollywood for ya. I will say, I am still proud of the work done around the movie and I'm happy it was done by a black producer and director. But if you want to watch a great movie about my life, watch the documentary, "Tupac: Resurrection." There's a reason it was nominated

for an Academy Award. Should've won.

MELISSA

Tupac, I want to thank you for coming on the show today. Before we close out, do you have any final words of advice to up and coming artists who may be watching.

TUPAC

Yeah. Be born white! Ha. And keep your sense of humor. Never lose that. Remember that ol' Pac told y'all to laugh.

MELISSA

Thank you, Tupac Shakur. [turns to camera] And thank you for joining us today in Stone Mountain, Georgia. We'll see you again soon on the next episode of "Over My Dead Body."

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON HANDSOME TUPAC PHOTO

[SOUND of the real Tupac rapping for about five seconds]

CUT TO:

[Roll End Credits]

FADE OUT.

"PHYLLIS DILLER: GOODNIGHT, I LOVE YOU!"

(Episode 8)

FADE IN:

EXT. PHILLYCAM BUILDING - DAY

To establish.

CUT TO:

INT. PHILLYCAM HALLWAY – VARIOUS - DAY

A large wooden cigarette holder is being carried down the

hallway toward the studio.

CUT TO:

INT. OMDB STUDIO - DAY

Marty Krzywonos is seated in the OMDB chair next to small table.

MARTY

[To Camera] Hello, I'm Marty Krzywonos and this is "Over My Dead Body," the only talk show that brings to life the most influential people from our history and culture. Today, we are joined by one of the most, if not the most, influential female comics of all time. In our studio today is a trailblazer and beloved icon -- the remarkable Phyllis Diller. We typically conduct our interviews in a cemetery, but we would do anything to accommodate the marvelous Miss Diller.

PHYLLIS

You're off to a good start.

CUT TO:

WIDE SHOT – MARTY AND PHYLLIS WITH A TABLE BETWEEN THEM

A large wooden cigarette holder filled with Phyllis Diller's ashes sits on a second chair. A mic and speaker are also on that chair.

MARTY

Thanks, and welcome to our show. We're honored to have such a comedic genius here with us this morning.

PHYLLIS

You're too kind. I'm very happy to be here. Thank you for having me. I apologize for the inconvenience...I would've liked to have been buried, but they told me I would've taken up the whole lot, plus most of the highway. [Cackles]

MARTY

Your ashes were said to be scattered over the Pacific Ocean, is that correct?

PHYLLIS

Yes, I was told that was the only place they could fit me and my ex-mother-in-law. If I had known the whale was gonna follow me into the afterlife, I would have brought a goddamn harpoon with me. [Cackles] Seriously, not even the ocean is big enough for me and that cow –- so here I am.

MARTY

Sharp as ever, I see. [beat] Would you mind sharing your story with our viewers?

PHYLLIS

Not at all. I was born in Lima, Ohio. My parents were Perry and Frances, and they were older when they had me.

I was an only child and never considered myself to be necessarily funny. I was very quiet in school, and on dates I let the boys do all the talking. That's how I landed my first husband.

MARTY

How did you meet your first love?

PHYLLIS

I was studying classical piano for a while but ended up transferring schools. That's when I met Sherwood. I dropped out and we were married in 1939.

MARTY

So, you were a housewife prior to your career? Was that the plan?

PHYLLIS

Yes, I was a mother of five beautiful children. I know, this face seems like it would be the perfect birth control, but when it's last call at the bar and you've got a vagina and a heartbeat... [Cackles]

MARTY

Did you find raising kids hard?

PHYLLIS

Let’s just say we spend the first twelve months of our children’s lives teaching them to walk and talk, and the next twelve months teaching them to sit down and shut up.

MARTY

So you were consumed with housework.

PHYLLIS

Not really. I figured cleaning your house while your kids are still growing is like shoveling the sidewalk before it stops snowing.

MARTY

You eventually went from housewife to comedian, actress, author, musician, and artist. How exactly did you make your big break into the industry?

PHYLLIS

I've been in showbiz since 1955. My first husband practically threw me into the audition room. He originally tried to push me into a grave he had dug, but I didn't fit...no surprise there. [beat] Anyway, I always said, "I became a stand-up comedian because I had a sit-down husband." That led me to my first job at thirty-seven as a female comic, at The Purple Onion in San Francisco. My two-week gig turned into 89 weeks. Once I set my mind to something, there's just no stopping me.

MARTY

Your career has certainly proven that to be true. [beat] Now, you were married twice, but you never wed your last

partner. Would you say that you're opposed to marriage these days?

PHYLLIS

Well, my first husband was basically my manager until we divorced. He was really just a piece of shit, I was quite unhappy...but I got five children out of it, so at least I can say he was good for something. Cheating on him was a lot of fun, however. I gave him the same birthday gift every year –- sloppy seconds. [Cackles]

MARTY

I see...

PHYLLIS

My second husband, Ward, now that stung a bit more. He turned out to be a bisexual alcoholic. It's not his fault that he was attracted to me. The gays adore me, and in his defense, I do resemble a man. I mean, having sex with me is like screwing a piece of sandpaper in a clown wig, and then throwing a feathered gown onto it while you're at it.

MARTY

With your second husband, the two of you actually got married, divorced, remarried and then re-divorced.

PHYLLIS

I learned one thing from him –- never go to bed mad, stay up and fight. [beat] Like I said, the man was bisexual and a drunk. One night he would think I was a man, the next

he would think I was a woman. It worked for him.

MARTY

When you came into the industry, comedy was strictly male-dominated. Why do you think you were able to become so successful as a woman?

PHYLLIS

Ya know, I think I just immediately fit in with the other men. When you have this little sex appeal, and this much chest hair, you've gotta use that to your advantage.

MARTY

And the cigarette holder?

PHYLLIS

Men hold their dicks; I held a cigarette holder. [beat] Actually, it was just a prop. I never smoked, but back then it was the thing to do.

MARTY

The cigarette holder certainly added to your presence, but you seemed to really sparkle on the stage with all of those glamorous costumes.

PHYLLIS

No, that was just sweat and grease, sweetheart. I used to work as a fryer at an all-night diner.

MARTY

You make fun of your appearance a great deal, however,

you were very conscious of it.

PHYLLIS

If you're referring to my many plastic surgeries, you can say it. I'm very proud of them.

MARTY

The American Academy of Cosmetic Surgery actually gave you an award for being so open about plastic surgery. You've had two nose jobs, three face-lifts, a chemical peel, a breast reduction, cheek implants, an eyeliner tattoo and bonded teeth. Why do you think you were so attracted to cosmetic surgery?

PHYLLIS

I think I just got sick of getting so many splinters from dragging my boobs around the hardwood. [beat] I underwent fifteen surgeries. I like to say, I had my face "renewed and recycled." [Cackles] I wouldn't take a single surgery back. I love the way I look. If it builds your self-esteem, I say, go for it!

MARTY

Was it really that hard for you to get a date?

PHYLLIS

When you look like a broom with a perm and you've got a cackle like mine, men just assume you're a witch. I once went on a blind date that ended with me being tied to a tree and set on fire. Hottest date I've ever been on.

MARTY

Sounds like it. [beat] During your career, you were in over forty films, several television series, and you even did voice acting. How did you find the motivation to work until the age of ninety?

PHYLLIS

I read this book, “The Magic of Believing.” I would say I owe everything to it. If you don't believe in yourself, how can you expect anyone else to? I had a very dear friend, terribly ugly, but a good friend, nonetheless. She told me comedy just wasn't my thing. I told her to kiss my white afro bush.

MARTY

As a comedic legend, what advice would you give female comedians today?

PHYLLIS

Use what works for you and keep going. That Amy Schumer girl talks a lot about her vagina, and it works. The only time anyone ever asked to see my vagina was at the gynecologist.

MARTY

Your entire career was a continuous climb to the top of the industry. Can you take us through those steps?

PHYLLIS

Sure. I became a copywriter to keep the family afloat, since my husband had fused his ass to our couch...and then I went into broadcasting. I had this local show, “Phyllis Dillis the Homely Friendmaker,” where I would give terrible, I mean, absolutely awful, advice to homemakers. That I would've done for free.

MARTY

So, you started to enjoy comedy from that point?

PHYLLIS

I started to realize that I could make people genuinely laugh. After that was done with, I auditioned for The Purple Onion and everything just sort of took off. Once you find your calling, it all just comes naturally.

MARTY

It's evident that comedy came quite naturally to you. You're known for your wild hair, wooden cigarette prop, and embellished attire. I was wondering, is that all you or is that just part of the act?

PHYLLIS

As I said, I never smoked a day in my life. I know, hard to believe with my perfect Mediterranean olive skin. That was in fact just a prop. My hair was actually accidental -- a home bleaching gone wrong.

MARTY

And the flashy, oversized clothing?

PHYLLIS

Well, between us, I actually have a pretty great rack, but if you wanna play a man's game, you've gotta look the part. The baggy clothing helped me fit in, made me look flat all around.

MARTY

So it was all just part of your act?

PHYLLIS

Yes, the whole persona as a matter of fact. In 1968, I read a cartoon in the local paper called “The Lockhorns of Levittown” that was about a couple who constantly argue. The husband drinks too much, the wife shops too much, they make fun of their neighbors -- really the opposite of the perfect family you see portrayed on television.

MARTY

So that was your inspiration?

PHYLLIS

Yes. I made up the character of my husband, called him Fang and complained about him throughout my act. I also poked fun at my poor cooking, while in real life I’m a pretty good cook. People responded to it, and others like Roseanne Barr and Joan Rivers kept it going. But it all started with “The Lockhorns” comic strip.

MARTY

You were also known to be very close with Bob Hope. How did the two of you meet?

PHYLLIS

I was performing on The Tonight Show with Jack Paar. I remember looking out into the crowd, and there he was, watching me, of all people. I couldn't believe it! I mean, there was the Bob Hope. I was absolutely obsessed with him and his work. He was my idol.

MARTY

So he just happened to be in the audience?

PHYLLIS

Actually, he came to the show to see me, specifically! That was one of the few times in my life someone came for me. [Cackles]

MARTY

And he loved your performance?

PHYLLIS

He looked at me and said, "You are great." That was when I knew I could go far. If a legend like Bob Hope believes in you, you'd better goddamn believe in yourself.

MARTY

I read that you actually wrote your own stand-up material, and in 2003 you donated a steel cabinet with 48 drawers

to the Smithsonian with all your jokes.

PHYLLIS

More than fifty thousand of them, all on index cards. I had to write them myself. If anyone else could've done my sets, they'd already be doing it. When I came into this career, I didn't have the luxury of female role models, so I mimicked men -- Sid Caesar, Milton Berle, Jonathan Winters.

MARTY

Those are some spectacular influences. [beat] You were famously known for your self-depreciating humor, why do you think that came so naturally to you?

PHYLLIS

Wow, hard to say, Marty. Maybe If you had a face like the end of a burnt cigarette, you'd understand. [Cackles]

MARTY

Oh, come on, you're a beautiful woman!

PHYLLIS

Look, Marty, darling, if you're trying to be husband number three, just say the word.

MARTY

I just meant –-

PHYLLIS

Relax, I know what you meant. I always thought using the audience for the joke was a scapegoat, anyway. It's funny to watch a performer be so shamelessly self-aware. We don't make fun of ourselves enough, and, well, I was such an easy target. Rodney Dangerfield was the best at it.

MARTY

I have to mention this -- I recently heard that the one and only Barbra Streisand was your opening act at The Bon Soir in Greenwich Village. What was that like?

PHYLLIS

She was absolutely fabulous. I truly appreciate women who can really hone their craft like that. She had the crowd crying by the time I got on that stage...crying of laughter, of course -- that shnoz really warmed them up.

MARTY

You were also a bestselling author. You published your first bestseller, “Phyllis Diller's Housekeeping Hints” in 1966. You then went on to write “Phyllis Diller's Marriage Manual,” “The Complete Mother,” “The Joys of Aging & How to Avoid Them,” and “Like a Lampshade in a Whorehouse: My Life in Comedy.” You must have been passionate about writing.

PHYLLIS

I still am. It really comes naturally, like writing stand-up. I basically just followed the golden rule -- write what you

know. I wrote about marriage, children, growing up -- it flowed out of me because it was real life, it was genuine, and it was relatable.

MARTY

And of course, you added in your incredible sense of humor, which, I have to say, created a multi-dimensional read.

PHYLLIS

I write how I speak, so I was hoping the readers would get a laugh or two out of it.

MARTY

I found it interesting that in your autobiography, you mentioned that you had a terribly unhappy childhood. You stated that your parents were quite cold and that your first marriage was a nightmare. Do you think those factors helped you in your career?

PHYLLIS

I think many comedians thrive off of some sort of trauma. I believe that I was traumatized right from birth.

MARTY

How's that?

PHYLLIS

Well, when I first came out, I was so hairy and monstrous, they had animal control on stand-by. [Cackles] Comedy is the music that we can all sing to, even in our darkest hours.

MARTY

I think that's a beautiful outlook.

PHYLLIS

Of course, it's hard to sing and dance with these flabby arms. Once I start, I just start flying away like a winged bat.

MARTY

Now, we know that you're a true jack of all trades. I read that you appeared as a piano soloist with several symphony orchestras between 1971 and 1981. Do you feel that you abandoned music too early in life?

PHYLLIS

Those were wonderful times. I've always had such an admiration for music. I don't believe that I ever abandoned it, I just found stand-up to be livelier.

MARTY

And you performed under the name “Dame Illya Dillya?”

PHYLLIS

[Cackles] Yes, I played a diva who took an eternity before she even touched the keys. I'd clean the piano, check the score, the lighting, anything to prolong the performance.

MARTY

You were known as "a fine concert pianist with a firm touch." People were quite stunned by your musical talent,

outside of your life of comedy.

PHYLLIS

With looks like mine, you've gotta either have talent or personality. Just ask Bette Midler. [Cackles]

MARTY

Good point. [beat] Now, let's take things back to 1958. Your very first television appearance. You were a contestant on Groucho Marx's quiz show, “You Bet Your Life.”

PHYLLIS

Ah, yes. Feels like yesterday...

MARTY

You practically stole the entire show, and Groucho's no amateur comedian, either.

PHYLLIS

Well, I think that everyone expected to see a housewife. Groucho gave me the opportunity to show them an entertainer.

MARTY

After your bit, Groucho said, and I quote, [in Groucho voice] "I'm sure you're gonna be a big success in show business and I think you made a very wise decision." Seems like he called that one pretty early on, huh?

PHYLLIS

Excellent imitation, Marty. You just gave me goosebumps...not an easy thing to do being that I'm dead. [beat] Yes, I was very honored to hear that and still consider it a great compliment. You know, there was no crazy clothing, no wacky hair -- it was just me up there. It gave me a great deal of confidence in the beginning to go forward and feel free to embellish my act. If no one tells you that you're funny in the beginning, you'll never make it.

MARTY

That actually brings me to my next question. Do you feel that without those embellishments, that people truly would have found you less funny?

PHYLLIS

Ya know, I talk a lot about my appearance, as we all know. When I decided that I was going to pursue this career path, I knew that no one was gonna laugh at a sexy, big-boobed comedian. No one is going to pay attention to the words coming out of my mouth if they're distracted by my physique, or face. I mean, I was lucky that I didn't have to worry about the face part.

MARTY

So, you hid your body so that people would take your comedy seriously?

PHYLLIS

Precisely. Between the two of us, I actually did a nude photoshoot for “Playboy” in the 90s. I mean, we were going for funny but, and I know this may shock a lot of people, it just looked like a sexy spread! Well, that's what “Playboy” said. It looked more like a spread of three-month-old salami, if you ask me.

MARTY

That’s quite an image. [beat] On top of all the creative side projects you've accomplished, many people may not know, you're also a very talented, self-taught artist.

PHYLLIS

I've always enjoyed creating, so that was kind of just thrown into the mix. I started painting around 1963 -- watercolors, acrylics, oils, you name it. I did a lot of fun, wacky portraits and still lifes. Filling the house with the artwork brought it to life, gave it character.

MARTY

I know that comedy is second nature to you...were you the same way with your art?

PHYLLIS

Art truly just came right out of my veins, just like my ex-husbands’ words would fly straight out of their asses. [Cackles]

MARTY

And at eighty-six you actually held parties where you sold your artwork, as well as your stage clothes and jewelry.

PHYLLIS

I thought, maybe there's another broad out there who wants a self-portrait of me to remind them they aren't so hideous, things could be worse.

MARTY

Speaking of the arts, aside from the piano, you were a wonderful singer, as well. Did you enjoy those performances?

PHYLLIS

Very much. I remember I had such a wonderful time performing “I Feel Pretty.” I think that was 1966. I just feel that it all goes together -- music, art, performance, comedy.

MARTY

You even once said, "If you can't dance to comedy, forget it. It's music." That's a great perspective.

PHYLLIS

Well, it's true. Humor is the music of life. If we can't laugh at all the bullshit, then what?

MARTY

On the topic of music, in 2012, you recorded a version of

Charlie Chaplin's “Smile,” with Thomas Lauderdale for the “Get Happy” album. I have to ask, is there anything you can’t do?

PHYLLIS

I don't half-ass anything. If I was going to commit to the industry, I was going to stay devoted. I was constantly busy, traveling, making music, doing stand-up, interviews, painting. People take "breaks" from their careers these days, I don't know what that even means. You want a break? Go grab a cup of coffee. If you want success, you have to go out there and earn it yourself. I don't just get laughs; I work for them every single day. Of course, now I’m at the age where my back goes out more than I do.

MARTY

Understood. [beat] You're also known for voicing several animated characters throughout the years. You were in the “Scooby-Doo” films, “Hey Arnold!” “The Powerpuff Girls,” and “Jimmy Neutron,” to name a few. Another renowned character you played was Thelma, Peter Griffin's mother on “Family Guy.” The show is still airing new episodes to this day.

PHYLLIS

I truly thought it was brilliant. That Seth Macfarlane is a genius.

MARTY

Okay, who is more likely to fit into their pants after

Thanksgiving, Peter Griffin or Fang's mother? For those who may not know, Fang jokes were a major part of your act.

PHYLLIS

Between drawing from the comic strip character and having two douchebags for a spouse, it made comedy a breeze. Anyway, the answer is Griffin.

MARTY

I should've guessed that. [beat] Would you mind taking some calls from our viewers?

PHYLLIS

I'd love to! The only person who ever rang my phone was my plastic surgeon -- to tell me he was running a special.

MARTY

Caller one, you're on. Miss Diller, this is Mr. Ellis from New York.

CALLER ONE

Oh! Miss Diller, it's such an honor! I have to ask, is it true that after you and your first husband divorced, his mother and sister sued you for defamation of character for speaking so poorly about them in your act?

PHYLLIS

Let me put it this way, I only referred to those two as Moby Dick and Captain Bligh. As far as I'm concerned, those were completely fictional characters that I was referring

to. Let's just say it didn't take long for them to settle out of court.

CALLER ONE

I was also wondering, Bob Hope once called you, "A Warhol mobile of spare parts picked up along a freeway." Do you take that as a compliment?

PHYLLIS

Oh, absolutely! Never heard a more accurate description of myself in my life!

MARTY

Would you say that you owe any of your success to Bob?

PHYLLIS

I don't believe that you can truly owe your success to anyone aside from yourself. I mean, it takes talent, guts, perseverance, and of course, blow jobs. With that being said, Bob truly did give me a great deal of help to jumpstart my career. At thirty-seven years old, I certainly benefited from that. He saw something in me that no one else did.

MARTY

What would you say you took away from your friendship with Mr. Hope?

PHYLLIS

What didn't I take away? He was one of the finest people I'd ever known. The kindest, gentlest, purest soul. I would

say he is certainly a large part as to why I have continued to stay so positive in my endeavors. Plus, we screwed each other's brains out for decades, with me usually on top. The last time I saw him he said, [sings] "Thanks...for the mammories..." [Cackles]

MARTY

In 2002, you decided to retire from stand-up. How did you come to that decision to finally throw in the towel?

PHYLLIS

I never really threw away the towel. I always kept it by my bedside, for obvious reasons. [Cackles]

MARTY

I just mean --

PHYLLIS

My last performance was at the Suncoast in Vegas. A very delightful crowd. At the end of the day, it was just a matter of energy. In order to do what I do, I need to be on 24/7. While I still had my drive, I just didn't have the stamina to continue. The quality wouldn't have been up to my standards, and if I couldn't do my act to its fullest extent, well, then I'd rather not do it at all -- which is completely different from my perspective on sex.

MARTY

I imagine that must have been a hard realization to come to.

PHYLLIS

I had a fabulous, lengthy career, but I knew it was time to step down, and I was extremely content with my body of work. Being content with my physical body on the other hand, that's another story. I have so many liver spots I ought to come with a side of onions. [Cackles]

MARTY

Would you care to take another call? A Mrs. Phillips from Tennessee.

PHYLLIS

Sure, I've got some time, right?!

CALLER TWO

Hi, Miss Diller! My question to you is, well, we all have our favorite Phyllis Diller lines, but I was wondering...what are <u>your</u> favorites?

PHYLLIS

Well...I wrote about fifty thousand of them, but if you put a gun to my head and made me tell you my favorites, it'd go something like this:

[Note: We can do this like a "Letterman Top 10 List," do them all, do a few. I'll leave it to you guys [Marty and Aimee] to decide how many and which ones you feel are best. I didn't number these lines as you can see, so you can just say "Quote 1, Quote 2, etc.]

- The reason women don't play football is because eleven of them would never wear the same outfit in public.

- I realized on our first wedding anniversary that our marriage was in trouble. Fang gave me luggage. It was packed.

- I admit I have a tremendous sex drive. My boyfriend lives forty miles away.

- I want my children to have all the things I couldn't afford. Then I want to move in with them.

- I once wore a peekaboo blouse. People would peek and then they'd boo.

- It's a good thing that beauty is only skin deep, or I'd be rotten to the core.

- A bachelor is a guy who never made the same mistake once.

- My photographs don't do me justice –- they just look like me.

- What I don't like about office Christmas parties is looking for a job the next day.

- My cooking was so bad, my kids thought Thanksgiving was to commemorate Pearl Harbor.
- I'm 18 years behind in my ironing. There's no use doing it now, it doesn't fit anybody I know.
- There is such a build-up of crud in my oven, there's only room to bake a single cupcake.
- Nothing was happening in my marriage. I nicknamed our waterbed Lake Placid.
- The best contraceptive for old people is nudity.
- I've been asked to say a couple of words about my husband, Fang. How about short and cheap?
- His finest hour lasted a minute and a half.
- Tranquilizers work only if you follow the advice on the bottle -- keep away from children.
- Always be nice to your children because they are the ones who will choose your rest home.

MARTY

Those are fantastic. [beat] Does it feel rewarding to receive such praise from other comedy legends?

PHYLLIS

Of course. Ya know, being a comedian is difficult. It takes a brave soul to stand up in front of an entire crowd and

accept the kind of ridicule or judgement that inevitably comes with the territory. I have such respect for other comedians, no matter how acclaimed. That being said, when given compliments by tremendously talented comedians whose work I am so blown away by -- it's quite surreal.

MARTY

On an unpleasant note, after your 80th birthday, you began to suffer from several illnesses. In 1999 your heart stopped, causing you to be fitted with a pacemaker. Shortly after, you suffered from a bad drug reaction that caused you to be paralyzed. After going through multiple traumas, how were you able to persevere?

PHYLLIS

Being paralyzed did have one benefit -- I could finally have anal sex! [Cackles]

MARTY

Phyllis, you're too much. [beat] You were eventually able to walk again, correct?

PHYLLIS

If you thought I was going to let a drug reaction or anal sex slow me down, you're dead wrong. I did what the physical therapist told me to, listened to the doctors, and was back to being me in no time.

MARTY

Well said. Unfortunately, another mishap in 2007 forced you to cancel your appearance on “The Tonight Show” where you were going to celebrate your 90th birthday.

PHYLLIS

Right. I fractured my back at a group orgy. Hey, every situation comes with a risk. [Cackles]

MARTY

And your final interview was in 2012 in your hometown?

PHYLLIS

Yes, I was accepting my Lifetime Achievement Award. I'm very proud of that one. You can go home again.

MARTY

You passed away at the age of ninety-five in your home in Brentwood. Do you wish you’d done anything differently?

PHYLLIS

I probably could've fit another marriage in, another boob job, maybe one more facelift. [beat] Truly, I lived my life to the beat of my own drum. I accomplished everything I set out to do. Even raised five kids. I wouldn't wish anything had gone differently. I died with a full and happy heart -- and an empty bladder. I believe I pissed myself at the end, but my memory's a bit foggy.

MARTY

People were devastated by your passing. Comedian Joan Rivers paid tribute to your career saying, "She was the first one who showed the anger that is in all of us, and that's what made it so funny, because she spoke for all these women who were sitting home with a bunch of children and a husband that didn't work."

PHYLLIS

Oh, Joanie. Such a sweet thing, that one. We've always bonded over that topic...well, that and safe sex.

MARTY

How's that?

PHYLLIS

Joan Rivers and I agreed that the best way to have safe sex was to lock the car door. [beat] Anyway, the two of us combined are the reason why there are so many new wings in hospitals all over the world. [Cackles]

MARTY

Do you have time for one last caller, Miss Diller? Mr. Thompson from Boston.

PHYLLIS

Well, I've got a meeting at twelve, but I can push it back.

CALLER THREE

Yeah, hi. We ever gonna see that “Playboy” shoot? I mean, it's bad enough you had such a nice rack and never showed it off. I definitely would have bought tickets for your show if I knew I was gonna see some nip.

PHYLLIS

And I would have had sex with you when I was alive if I thought I was going to feel some tip -- but I can tell just by your voice that there wouldn't be much to feel.

CALLER THREE

Touche. I should know better than to spar with you. [beat] Hey, Phyllis, I’ve read everywhere that you were the very first female stand-up comedian.

PHYLLIS

I’m glad you can read.

CALLER THREE

You even wrote that on the back of your autobiography. But I really think you’re leaving out Loretta.

PHYLLIS

Loretta who?

CALLER THREE

Why...Loretta Mary Aiken from North Carolina.

PHYLLIS

Name doesn't ring a bell.

CALLER THREE

She went by the stage name of Moms Mabley. She started doing stand-up in 1919, when you were two years old. So your whole bullshit story about being the first female stand-up comic has been exposed. Can you feel the tip now? [Laughs, then dial tone]

MARTY

I apologize for that last caller.

PHYLLIS

It's okay. [beat] I had it coming. I guess I took George Bernard Shaw's saying to heart: "Life isn't about finding yourself. Life is about creating yourself." Moms Mabley was black, and back then, blacks weren't given credit for much, especially on television. People referred to me as the first female stand-up and I didn't correct them. For the record, Moms Mabley was the very first female stand-up comedian. So please accept my apologies.

MARTY

So, what's next on the horizon?

PHYLLIS

For the last few months, I've been writing a new set -- you know, about being dead and all. It's a topic I have yet to bring up. I didn't want to scare anyone, but I think it's time

to show people that being dead isn't so bad. We can still love and laugh and even eat without caring about the pounds. Although people still try to send me to the pound. [Cackles]

MARTY

I bet it'll be fantastic. Do you think this interview has possibly helped push that agenda at all?

PHYLLIS

Alright, don't toot your own horn. I do think this interview has shown me that it's time to finally finish the set. Maybe they'll release it as one of those Netflix specials everyone and their mother seems to get...actually, I'll try for Amazon. They seem to be "popping off" as the kids would say.

MARTY

Well, I can certainly tell you that the entire world, including myself, would absolutely adore hearing the phenomenal Phyllis Diller perform once more. Any final thoughts for the viewers tuning in?

PHYLLIS

Life is too short to live unhappily, take it from me. Don't wait, go after your dreams, laugh, dance, and get the damn tummy tuck! [Cackles] Thank you so much for having me. [beat] Goodnight, I love you!

MARTY

And we love you, Phyllis! [To Camera] I'm Marty Krzywonos, and we look forward to seeing you again soon on the next episode of "Over My Dead Body."

CUT TO:

[Roll End Credits]

FADE OUT.

"Mark Twain: The Reports of My Death Are Greatly Exaggerated!"

(Episode 9)

FADE IN:

EXT. WOODLAWN CEMETARY - ELMIRA, NEW YORK – DAY

[Host sits on OMDB.TV chair at gravesite beside Twain's headstone]

HOST

[To camera] Hello, I'm Steven Kunes and we're live at Woodlawn Cemetery in Elmira, New York -- location of the final resting spot of Mr. Samuel Clemmons, otherwise known as Mark Twain, for this week's episode of "Over My Dead Body." [Turns to headstone] First things first, do you prefer Clemens or Twain?

TWAIN

Take a wild fucking guess.

HOST

Well, the inscription says both.

TWAIN

My, aren't we observant.

HOST

Also, what's up with the roses?

TWAIN

Women leave them. They stand there and cry while I look up their dress. Last week it was a bus tour from New Jersey.

HOST

At least they make it a point to visit.

TWAIN

I'd rather they stayed home.

HOST

Really?

TWAIN

I don't like people much.

HOST

Why is that, sir?

TWAIN

Where should I start?

HOST

[To camera] The remarkable, irascible, Mark Twain, coming right up.

DISSOLVE TO:

[Opening Animated Credits & Theme Music]

CUT TO:

FADE IN:

EXT. WOODLAWN CEMETERY - ELMIRA, NEW YORK - DAY

[Host is already seated in OMDB.TV director's chair]

HOST

[To camera] Think you know a lot about Mark Twain? Think again. Twain is everywhere, from literature to popular culture. As one of the greatest American authors and humorists of the late nineteenth and early twentieth

centuries, he is undeniably the Father of American Literature. Yet, he was also an inventor, steamboat pilot, prospector and militia man -- as well as a snarky satirist and cutting-edge commentator on humanity and American life. While he is best known for his classic, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Twain's body of work is expansive. His unique philosophy reveals deep issues, from freedom and human rights, to science, slavery and religion. Yet, for someone who makes millions laugh, his life was also filled with a dark sadness. So, let's meet the great writer and adventurer extraordinaire. [Turns to headstone] Mr. Mark Twain, welcome to "Over My Dead Body." Good morning, sir.

TWAIN

What's good about it?

HOST

Did we wake up on the wrong side of the bed?

TWAIN

Not at all. As a matter of fact, I came up with a great title for my new book. It's called "Humans Suck."

HOST

Why is that?

TWAIN

Most people choose to help others because of the personal benefits that they themselves expect to obtain.

HOST

So, you don't believe in charity?

TWAIN

God Lord, yes, my man! But she did nothing for free, if you catch my drift.

HOST

Did you not pay for a former slave to attend three years of law school at Yale?

TWAIN

It was the least I could do for the man considering what he had gone through. Do you, perchance, have a smoke, sir? Cigars are hard to come by around here.

HOST

No, I'm sorry about that. I must say your grave is remarkable. Twelve feet tall, or two fathoms -- a measure riverboat captains would call out as "mark twain." Very clever.

TWAIN

Some weirdo with a man crush used a ladder and stole it once. They nabbed him a few days later and the judge sentenced him to thirty days in jail where he had to give head the whole time. Otherwise known as hard labor.

HOST

You may be interested to know that on July 4, 2003, Hannibal, Missouri dedicated a new statue to you which paid tribute to your career as a steamboat pilot on the Mississippi River.

TWAIN

I wouldn't exactly call it a career.

HOST

Well, you certainly made a name for yourself. From your experience as a steamboat pilot, the term "mark twain" means it is safe to sail.

TWAIN

It's also a metaphor for life. Everybody has a certain depth to them -- or limit, per se. You, for example, seem a bit shallow.

HOST

Thanks. You often drew from your life in your writings. I'm sure our audience is excited to know a little about you, Mr. Twain.

TWAIN

Sure, what the hell. I was born Samuel Langhorne Clemens on November 30, 1835 in the town of Florida, Missouri -- two weeks after Halley's Comet appeared in its closest approach to the Earth. I'm sure some cosmic dust affected my mental capabilities after that. I was one of

seven children, and the second to last child born. Unfortunately, my brothers Orion, Henry, and sister Pamela were the only ones who survived. My father, John Marshall Clemens, worked as a Tennessee country merchant, a lawyer, then a judge. My mother was Jane Lampton Clemens –- a great mother.

HOST

You were a very sickly child. Your mother worried you might not make it.

TWAIN

Incorrect sir! She was worried I would make it!

HOST

Okay. In 1839, when you were four, your father moved the family to Hannibal, Missouri, a town by the Mississippi River. This changed your life, right?

TWAIN

Certainly did. It was on the banks of the Mississippi River that I reveled in life along a river busy with steamboat activity and other pleasures. I often traveled in makeshift rafts or cavorted in various swimming holes where I spied on the girls and played with myself. Not to mention, a cave nearby afforded me further opportunity for exploration and adventure. In fact, it was in the cave I explored the voluptuous body of the town whore and got laid for the first time.

HOST

But your childhood was not entirely one of carefree play. Your father faltered with various business speculations. When he died in 1847 of pneumonia, you were only twelve years old and were forced to quit school to help support your family.

TWAIN

I went to work as a typesetter for Orion who owned several newspapers, one of which was the *Hannibal Journal*. I also began writing under the pseudonym S.L.C.

HOST

What does S.L.C stand for?

TWAIN

You would never win on *Jeopardy*.

HOST

Do you consider yourself a self-taught writer?

TWAIN

Even though I didn't finish school, I came to learn that no matter where I went in life, I could still educate myself by life experiences and by reading at the library. Writing came naturally.

HOST

From the ages of 18 to 22 you worked as a printer, traveling from Missouri to New York, Cincinnati,

Philadelphia and St. Louis. What came next?

TWAIN

In 1857, I stopped writing when I was in St. Louis because I was fascinated with river boating. Then I became a steamboat pilot after befriending Horace E. Bixby, a master pilot. He made me memorize over two thousand miles of riverbed. He also made me retrieve things from his pants pocket while we were sailing because his hands were on the wheel. He also kept asking me if I'd ever seen a grown man naked. Not sure what that had to with steamboatin'.

HOST

Did you not get your younger brother, Henry, a job on the same boat you were on?

TWAIN

Yes, the Pennsylvania. Why bring that up?

HOST

Because what happened there seriously affected you.

TWAIN

Just because he got blown up by a boiler when I was off the ship engaging in some irreverent occupation, doesn't mean squat.

HOST

So, Mr. Twain, soon the river trade was effectively stopped by the Civil War, and you traveled to Nevada at

the height of the silver rush.

TWAIN

Yeah, that war screwed everything up, so I thought it best to head west.

HOST

Didn't you join a Confederate Militia before leaving?

TWAIN

Not proud of it.

HOST

In fact, did you not hightail it and run when Grant was headed towards your town?

TWAIN

I prefer the word, "disbanded."

HOST

In Nevada you started writing again. This time using *Mark Twain* for the first time.

TWAIN

I found work at a local newspaper and used other pseudonyms, such as Thomas Jefferson Snodgrass.

HOST

Why use another name?

TWAIN

Why not? Haven't you ever wanted to remain anonymous? Shoot, I was doing so much scandalous shenanigans -- figured it was the best way to not be named as the father.

HOST

Speaking of shenanigans -- isn't the real reason you used pseudonyms is that you got in a bit of trouble out there?

TWAIN

My mouth got me into a duel with this other newspaperman who was a complete moron. Never get into a battle of wits over religion or politics with an unarmed man.

HOST

What happened?

TWAIN

Well, he was soon armed -- with a big pistol, too! So, I once again hightailed out of there to San Francisco where I landed a job as a reporter, but that didn't last long. I had to hightail it out of there, too. Something about owing a bond for a buddy who skipped out on his court appearance for fighting in a bar. Ended up at Jackass Hill, an aptly named mining town.

HOST

Turned out to be a fortuitous event. Wasn't it there where you wrote your famous story, *The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County?*

TWAIN

Actually, I totally ripped that story off a guy in a bar after overhearing him tell it to a bunch of drunk dummies. The published title isn't the real title, either.

HOST

What was the real title?

TWAIN

From Frog Legs to Spread Legs. There were no ladies in that town, if you catch my drift.

HOST

Well, it was your first claim to fame. It became an instant success and made you famous. It also got you a job writing travelogues -- the first one in Hawaii.

TWAIN

Where the hell is Hawaii?

HOST

Back then they were called the Sandwich Islands.

TWAIN

Oh yes. Good memories there. On my first day walking

the beach, I came across some young ladies swimming naked in the ocean.

HOST

That must have been a shock.

TWAIN

Not really. I just sat down on their clothes and waited for them to come ashore. I tell you those island girls are loads of fun -- pun intended! Still, to this day, I can smell coconut oil.

HOST

The following year you traveled to the Mediterranean, Europe and the Middle East. Your experiences lead to the book *Innocents Abroad*.

TWAIN

I had a broad in every country, and they weren't so innocent.

HOST

It was a very popular book.

TWAIN

Sex sells -- or the hinting at it. In any event, it kept my editor busy.

HOST

Your travels led you to meet your wife, Olivia, the daughter of a very wealthy New York coal merchant. You

married her and then settled in Hartford, Connecticut, where you continued to write.

TWAIN

Best advice I could ever give a writer: marry into money.

HOST

In 1875, your novel *Tom Sawyer* was published, followed by *Life on the Mississippi* in 1883 -- and then your masterpiece, *Huckleberry Finn, in 1885*. Seems like marriage was good for you.

TWAIN

I gave Olivia the nickname Frog Legs, if you catch my meaning. We were married 34 years.

HOST

I read she died in Italy.

TWAIN

Thanks for reminding me, asshole. We had a spaghetti bolognaise dinner and split a cannoli, then she said to the waiter "what a great meal" and dropped dead. We returned on the same ship, but not in the same cabin.

HOST

From that point on, your work, while still humorous, grew distinctly darker.

TWAIN

Funny how that happens.

HOST

Yet despite your numerous setbacks, you wrote a total of 28 books, along with essays, articles, and short stories over your lifetime. How were you so prolific?

TWAIN

Cocaine was legal.

HOST

You once wrote that, “Twenty years from now, you will be more disappointed by the things you didn't do than by the ones you did.” Do you still feel this way?

TWAIN

Good God, yes, my man. I am still upset I never got to screw Maude Adams.

HOST

The famous Broadway actress?

TWAIN

Or Sarah Bernhardt...or Ethel Barrymore...or...

HOST

You may be interested to know, since you are known as a humorist, satirist, and social commentator, an award for comedy called The Mark Twain Prize for American Humor is now given to people who have had an impact on American society like you.

TWAIN

Is that so? Anybody interesting win the thing?

HOST

Well, to name a few: Richard Pryor, Jonathan Winters, George Carlin, Bill Cosby, and Ellen DeGeneres.

TWAIN

What's so great about them?

HOST

They're a crackhead, a lunatic, a drunk, a rapist and a lesbian. In that order.

TWAIN

Sounds about right, but I am not sure what a crackhead is.

HOST

Think cocaine -- only smoked. You may also be interested to know, sir, that Ernest Hemingway, one of the greatest modern American authors, gave you a great tribute when he said: "All modern American literature comes from one book by Mark Twain called *Huckleberry Finn*."

TWAIN

What happened to him?

HOST

He blew his head off with a shotgun.

TWAIN

That's one way not to finish a novel.

HOST

Also, in 1976, an asteroid was named after you: *2362 Mark Twain*.

TWAIN

Shoulda been a comet.

HOST

So, let's talk a bit about that famous book. Set in the antebellum South, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is more than the story of a young misfit who floats down the Mississippi River on a raft with Jim, a runaway slave.

TWAIN

You must have a PhD in obviousness. The inspiration for Huck Finn was Tom Blankenship, a boy four years older than me who I knew growing up in Hannibal. Blankenship's family was poor and his father, a laborer, had a reputation as the town drunk who beat Tom silly.

HOST

So much of it was based on real people and events?

TWAIN

In *Huckleberry Finn*, I drew Tom Blankenship exactly as he was. He was ignorant, unwashed, insufficiently fed -- but he had as good a heart as any boy ever had. I don't

know what happened to him, though. I heard a rumor he became a justice of the peace in Montana. Yet, other rumors say he was jailed for theft or died of cholera.

HOST

What is certain is that *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* has been controversial. Just a month after its American release in 1885, it was banned by the public library in Concord, Massachusetts, for its supposedly coarse language and low moral tone.

TWAIN

The folks who brought us the Salem Witch Trials got no place talking low moral tone this or that. They can stick a pitchfork in their asses for all I care. And twist it up there good.

HOST

In the mid-20th century, critics began condemning the book as racist, and in the ensuing decades it was removed from some school reading lists.

TWAIN

So much for the evolution of our species.

HOST

You began the book with the preface, "Persons attempting to find a motive in this narrative will be prosecuted; persons attempting to find a moral in it will be banished; persons attempting to find a plot in it will be shot." Why?

TWAIN

My books are like water -- those of the great geniuses are wine. Fortunately, everybody drinks water.

HOST

After becoming a successful writer, you sunk money into a number of bad investments and eventually went bankrupt. One investing debacle involved an automatic typesetting machine.

TWAIN

In 1874, I spotted one of the first typewriters, a Remington, in a Boston store window. Although it could only type capital letters and I had to operate the carriage return with a foot pedal, I bought it for $125. It was a piece of shit, but I wrote the first porn in America written on a typewriter.

HOST

Seriously?

TWAIN

Hell yes! Took me 10 minutes to write faster, harder and deeper.

HOST

Conversely, when offered the chance to invest in the telephone, you reportedly turned down its inventor, Alexander Graham Bell.

TWAIN

It was a stupid invention. Who wants to talk to people all the time?

HOST

And you invented as well, including a self-pasting scrapbook, which sold well -- and an elastic strap for pants, which didn't.

TWAIN

Win some, lose some. How come nobody mentions the dildo?

HOST

Notwithstanding, in 1894, you declared bankruptcy. But then, the next year, you embarked on an around-the-world speaking tour in order to pay off your debts.

TWAIN

Which I was able to do within several years. People loved hearing my stories about masturbation.

HOST

I'm not gonna touch that.

TWAIN

Nice. You know, the monkey is the only animal, except man, that practices this science -- hence he is our brother.

HOST

Good to know. Before the show, my producer told me that Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of the famous anti-slavery book *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, was your next-door neighbor in Hartford. Is that true?

TWAIN

Unfortunately, yes.

HOST

What was she like?

TWAIN

She was a bitch. Her dog kept crapping in my yard and chasing my cats, and she had a problem with my house -- especially the gun turrets. Not sure why. I designed that house myself. Also, her book sucks.

HOST

Who is Laura Hawkins Frazer?

TWAIN

She was the inspiration for Becky Thatcher. She was also the inspiration for numerous cave rompings.

HOST

You were childhood sweethearts, right?

TWAIN

She was one of many. I'd say more tangy than sweet.

HOST

Would you care to take a call, Mr. Twain?

TWAIN

If I must.

HOST

Christine from Red Bank, New Jersey, say hello to Mark Twain.

CALLER #1

[Excited woman's voice] Oh, Mr. Twain, Mr. Twain, are you any of your characters!?

TWAIN

Well, now, I am all of them and none.

CALLER #1

[Angry] That's a contradiction!

TWAIN

My my, such big words for a little girl.

CALLER #1

I'm 65, you asshole!

TWAIN

And a feisty 65 at that. I like you already. I'll bet you kick up quite a storm in the rack.

CALLER #1

You're damn straight. You know, Mr. Twain. You said something that has stuck with me my entire life. You said, "The two most important days in your life are the day you are born and the day you find out why."

TWAIN

Well, it's true.

CALLER #1

So, I'm wondering why you were born.

TWAIN

To pull your grandmother's pants down.

CALLER #1

Eat me. [She hangs up]

TWAIN

Yum yum.

HOST

Let's try this again. Darren from Santa Barbara, California, meet Mr. Mark Twain.

CALLER #2

[Gay voice] Hi, Mr. Twain. I'm wondering what you think of our sense of humor in America today.

TWAIN

What sense of humor?

CALLER #2

That's what I figured.

TWAIN

Actually, you may be surprised to know I think America has made great strides in the humor department and just doesn't know it.

HOST

How's that?

TWAIN

Well today, a man can call himself a woman and people won't bat an eyelash.

CALLER #2

But if he "identifies" as a woman...

TWAIN

What the hell does <u>that</u> mean? No man has the slightest clue what it is to be a woman. What's this "identify" hogwash? Hey, I have a riddle for you.

CALLER #2

Go ahead.

TWAIN

What do you get when you take a man, pump him full of estrogen, give him breast implants and a long wig, put him in an evening gown and chop off his dick?

CALLER #2

I give up.

TWAIN

You get a guy with estrogen, implants, a wig, a dress and no dick.

HOST

So, you don't buy the men in women's sports thing?

TWAIN

Maybe when Lebron James puts on lipstick and joins the WBA, I'll consider it.

HOST

Okay, we have a letter from a history professor, William Longyard, from Virginia. He'd like to get your take on a few current events.

TWAIN

Sure.

HOST

[Holds up letter] Woke culture.

TWAIN

That's a con where you try to convince somebody that they were asleep all along and whatever they think they've experienced never really happened. Bill Cosby invented it. It's a criminal defense attorney's wet dream.

HOST

Cancel culture.

TWAIN

Same thing. If you don't like something, it never happened. A divorce lawyer's wet dream. Poof, it's gone.

HOST

Are you aware that there was once an American actor named Hal Holbrook who spent several decades of his life traveling around the world doing a one-man show where he pretended to be you?

TWAIN

Don't get me started. The guy wore a white suit and pontificated about life using my name. A total blowhard. It used to really piss me off, until I returned the favor.

HOST

How's that?

TWAIN

I performed my own one-man show -- as Hal Holbrook! Would you care for a sample?

HOST

I'm all ears.

TWAIN

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to my one-man show. My name is Hal Holbrook, and I claim to be an actor. The reason I pursued a career in the arts is simple: I'm dumb as a cowbell, have no discernable skills, and I smell like I slept under a park bench. [to Host] How's that for an opening?

HOST

It's catchy for sure.

TWAIN

So I escaped into the world of make-believe. I pretend I'm an actor. I pretend I'm a famous writer named Mark Twain. And I pretend I have a big dick when truth be told, I'm no actor, I'm no writer, and the only words a woman has ever shouted to me are, "Is it in, yet?" [Laughs]

HOST

Moving on. Delia, a high school teacher from Newtown, Pennsylvania. What's your question?

CALLER #3

Good afternoon, Mr. Twain. I have two questions: What do you think of today's authors, and did you really write in bed?

TWAIN

First answer...there are no authors worth reading today. And yes, I wrote most of my books in bed. That's where

my best thinking happened -- so rather than run across a cold, dark room to my desk and break my little toe for the seventh time, I just kept a pencil and paper on the nightstand, next to the lubricant.

HOST

I read that in 1907, three years before you died, you received an honorary degree from Oxford and were so proud of the robe they gave you at graduation, you wore it to your daughter's wedding. Tell me that can't be true.

TWAIN

Let's just say we looked like two brides walking down the aisle.

HOST

Okay, our final caller is Brian from Sandusky, Ohio. What's your question for Mark Twain?

CALLER #4

First of all, I'd like to thank you for the wonderful book you left the world.

TWAIN

You're welcome. Are you really from Sandusky?

CALLER #4

Yes, I am.

TWAIN

It must suck to live in a town with the same name as a convicted child molester.

CALLER #4

It hasn't helped property values, but I guess things could be worse.

TWAIN

Yeah, maybe Hitler, Idaho. Or Mussolini, Montana.

CALLER #4

Or live on Ted Bundy Avenue.

TWAIN

How about Harvey Weinstein Circle?

HOST

I think this is the start of a beautiful friendship.

CALLER #4

Cunnilingus, Mississippi.

TWAIN

Smegma, Wyoming.

HOST

[Interrupts] I think you might have found a long-lost son, so to speak.

TWAIN

Could be.

HOST

Speaking of descendants, your only surviving child, Clara, died in 1962 at age 88. Clara Clemens had one child, Nina, who passed away in 1966. But she was childless, so there are no direct descendants of you alive today.

TWAIN

Thanks for the update, douchebag.

HOST

You predicted that you would die when Halley's Comet returned.

TWAIN

I came in with Halley's Comet, and I expected to go out with it. I died on April 21, 1910, and Halley's Comet was once again visible in the sky.

HOST

Any last words Mr. Twain?

TWAIN

I'm glad I'm dead.

HOST

And we're glad you took the time to come on our show. [Turns to camera] That's the story from Elmira, New

York. We'll see you again soon on the next episode of "Over My Dead Body."

FADE OUT.

"HOWARD COSELL: I NEVER PLAYED THE GAME!"

(Episode 10)

FADE IN:

EXT. WESTHAMPTON CEMETERY, NEW YORK - DAY

[Host sits in OMDB.TV chair by headstone displaying Howard Cosell's name]

HOST

[Facing camera] Hello, I'm Steven Kunes coming to you from Westhampton Cemetery in Suffolk County New York, location of the famous sportscaster Howard Cosell's memorial, for this week's episode of *Over My Dead Body.* [Turns to headstone] Welcome, Mr. Cosell, to the show.

COSELL

Why, thank you. You're certainly lucky to have me.

HOST

Well okay, since you want to go there, to that subject specifically --

COSELL

What subject might that be?

HOST

Vanity and ego -- yours especially.

COSELL

Well, I <u>am</u> the greatest of all time. And I've been called "Humble Howard" -- so that should give you a clue.

HOST

Not everybody likes you.

COSELL

There are many haters out there.

HOST

Many find you to be pompous and phony.

COSELL-

Ya think?

HOST

In your own words, you never played the game, but you felt like more of an expert than the guys actually playing the game.

COSELL

That's just a play on words.

HOST

How's that?

COSELL

You're not a former pro ball player, are you?

HOST

No, and what's up with the hairpiece?

COSELL

I knew you were going to go there. It was to keep my head warm.

HOST

Even inside Madison Square Garden?

COSELL

Listen, you little monkey, I ain't got time for this shit.

HOST

Did you not once call an African American wide receiver that?

COSELL

He was fast as hell. And what the hell is an African American? Was he drafted out of Africa?

HOST

It's a long story. However, some say that remark cost you your Monday Night Football gig.

COSELL

You win some, you lose some.

HOST

Coming up, the indisputable champ of sports broadcasting, Mr. Howard Cosell.

DISSOLVE TO:

[Opening Animated Credits & Theme Music]

CUT TO:

FADE IN:

EXT. WESTHAMPTON CEMETERY, NEW YORK - DAY

[Host is already sitting in OMDB.TV chair]

HOST

[To camera] You all know our next guest from his tenure on ABC's Monday Night Football. But there is much more to his interesting life. He has been voted the most loved and the most hated sportscaster of all time. So how do you explain the contradictions? We're about to find out. Ladies and gentlemen, [turning to headstone] Mr. Howard Cosell. Welcome to the show, sir.

COSELL

Thank you. I'm very happy to be here. As for the contradictions...

HOST

I think before we get to the meat and potatoes, can you provide some back story of your life for our younger viewers?

COSELL

Sure. Given my present location, you already know the ending...so I'll start at the beginning. I was born in North Carolina on March 25th, 1918, in Winston-Salem. My parents were Nellie and Isidore Cohen.

HOST

Not Cosell, right?

COSELL

Listen asshole, don't interrupt me again. You are correct. I was born Howard William Cohen. I changed it later

when I was in college because my grandpa's name was Cosell. The jerk-off immigration guys on Ellis Island wrote the wrong name down, and my dumbass pop decided to just keep it. When I was nine, for some reason, we moved to Brooklyn. My mom wanted to open a furniture store or some other idiotic business that Jewish people run. I attended public schools and got the crap beat out of me every day -- probably why I liked boxing so much at first. After high school, I attended New York University, where I studied English Lit. I then went on to NYU School of Law. After serving as editor of the Law Review and making Phi Beta Kappa, I graduated in 1940 and took a job with one of those elite law firms. But World War II interrupted all that. I became one of the youngest in the Army to earn the rank of Major. I met, got laid for the first time, and married Sergeant Mary Abrams. Everyone called her Emmy. I was made a Commissioned Transportation Officer but never fired a shot. After the war, I opened my own law office.

HOST

Can I ask a question?

COSELL

No! I'll let you know when you can. I've got a lot of experience with this stuff. And can you guess who was one of my first clients?

HOST

I'm all ears.

COSELL

Willie Mays. How's that for beginner's luck?

HOST

Impressive. Speaking of baseball, were you not the lawyer for the Little League of New York?

COSELL

I was, and it led to me hosting a Saturday morning radio show where my little leaguers actually interviewed professional baseball players.

HOST

On one program, Hank Bauer complained about having been benched by coach Casey Stengel, proving that players would respond to your tough questions that they would normally have balked at if asked by another reporter.

COSELL

That got me liking broadcasting so much I quit being a lawyer. Pissed my wife off, though. A big part of my success was using that interview format. I asked difficult questions, and I gave athletes the opportunity to make personal observations. I also created drama by using an accusatory tone. This put guys off balance as if I'd knocked them in the head. Then ironically, professional boxing came calling and thankfully, the wife was glad for the money, and that I'd be out of town so long.

HOST

That's when you met Muhammad Ali –- formerly Cassius Clay. You were the first to call him by his Islamic name.

COSELL

Hell yeah, of course I did. Who wants to be named after a slave owner? Besides, I liked the man -- he was just as arrogant as me, but not a mean bone in his body.

HOST

Your advocacy for Ali when he dodged the draft probably helped with the Supreme Court decision that gave him his title back after it was stripped away.

COSELL

Glad that happened.

HOST

And your staccato voice was distinctive. Along with your analysis and context, it was a completely different approach to sportscasting.

COSELL

Yes, my intellectual approach completely transformed the profession.

HOST

Your most famous call was an example of this --

COSELL

[Loud] Down goes Frazier! Down goes Frazier! Down goes Frazier!

HOST

That is one of the most quoted phrases in broadcasting history.

COSELL

Of course it is. It should be the only one.

HOST

ABC hired you to call some of the most famous fights of all time in the 70s and early 80s. Like Ken Norton beating Ali in ‘73, and Ali over Spinks in ‘78 to regain the title. But most people remember you for the time in front of millions of viewers, on live TV, when a prefight altercation knocked your hairpiece off.

COSELL

Didn’t faze me a bit. Kept my cool. Cool as a cucumber.

HOST

You quit calling matches while on the air in 1982, during the Holmes/Cobb fight. Why?

COSELL

They should’ve stopped that fight. Two weeks earlier, a guy got killed in the ring. So, when Holmes was smashing

Cobb, I announced on air that if that referee didn't stop the fight, I'd never call another bout.

HOST

It caused quite a controversy.

COSELL

Yeah well, after that they put in a bunch of reforms...fifteen rounds went down to twelve, the ref could now stop an unfair fight on his own -- so hey, my mouth is a lethal weapon.

HOST

By 1970, you turned your attention elsewhere.

COSELL

Yes. I was doing Monday Night Football by then.

HOST

They teamed you up with two former football players, Frank Gifford and Don Meredith.

COSELL

Two of the biggest dumbasses the world has ever seen.

HOST

But the dynamics in the booth between you guys made the show hit number one in the ratings, week after week.

COSELL

That was because of me. I carried those idiots on my back for twelve years.

HOST

That's harsh.

COSELL

I just tell it like it is.

HOST

You also coined a famous phrase during your tenure on Monday Night Football --

COSELL

[Loud] He could...go...all...the...way!

HOST

Still repeated in every NFL game today. [pause] We have a caller, Mrs. Andrea Martin from Sterling Heights, Michigan on the line. She has a question for you...would you mind?

COSELL

By all means.

CALLER #1

Mr. Cosell? In 1983, TV Guide called you the All-Time Best Sportscaster in the first 40 years of television. Who would you say is the best now?

COSELL

That's easy. It's that lady on FOX Sports –- Erin Andrews.

CALLER #1

Is there any particular reason?

COSELL

Two very good ones, as a matter of fact. [laughs]

CALLER #1

Also, what do you think of men competing in women's sports?

COSELL

I love it -- because I hate women's sports.

CALLER #1

So it would be okay for Caitlyn Jenner to compete in a decathlon in the woman's division?

COSELL

Don't get me started. There's no amount of surgery or hormones that would make Bruce Jenner lose to a female athlete. Although let me just state, for the record, that once you swallow a dick, it's a game changer.

HOST

Moving on. In 1985, you published your memoir "I Never Played the Game." Earlier you called it a play on words,

but it pissed off a lot of people, and they said it was bitter ranting -- in fact, ABC fired you.

COSELL

They couldn't handle the truth. I didn't care. By then, Monday Night Football was a stagnant bore. So 32 years with ABC went down the drain.

HOST

On top of that, you've never been inducted in the NFL Hall of Fame. Why is that?

COSELL

Who cares? It's got nothing to do with fame. If it did, I'd be in there. I'm famous the world over –- the top-rated broadcaster in history. Starred in movies and television. Everyone knows my name. I'm in the Television Hall of Fame, for God's sake.

HOST

You once said that O.J. Simpson had an uncanny instinct to kill you with a head fake.

COSELL

I said, "he can kill you with his swiftness in a single second, he can kill you with his speed." Some of my best work.

HOST

You died in the middle of his murder trial. Did you know he was acquitted?

COSELL

Yes, Johnnie Cochran keeps me in the loop regarding all things O.J. [pause] So there it is...my words are profound. Told you he could and looks like he did.

HOST

After Monday Night Football, you started your own show called "Sportsbeat." It suffered poor ratings and was cancelled after just three months.

COSELL

Your point being...?

HOST

After that, you never appeared on television again. Just radio.

COSELL

My voice has always been better than my face.

HOST

Your daughter Hilary was one of the first sports producers, and an assistant producer on the ABC News show 20/20. During her career she received four Emmy nominations. You must be very proud.

COSELL

Hilary is one hundred percent me –- except for the pompous, arrogant, abrasive, and bitter elements. In other words, she's one-tenth of one percent her old man.

HOST

Is she your only child?

COSELL

Yes, although I have a nephew Greg, who's a sportscaster at NFL Films, and my grandson Colin, who announces the Mets games at Shea Stadium. That's the only downside of being deceased, I really miss those two...and of course my wife Emmy. Everyone else can pound sand.

HOST

Why do you think you never played sports, Mr. Cosell?

COSELL

First, I was a puny kid. I never got picked to play on any team when I was young unless it was for *Smear the Queer*. Probably where my affinity for running backs comes from. Anyway, I got good and fast, with some pretty good moves, getting away from those meat mongers, but never got on a team.

HOST

What about later in life?

COSELL

Never did hit the weight room. I was called marshmallow for a reason. So, I just made it a habit of studying the game from a logical-analytical point of view. I mean, I dissected the crap out of sports. It's why I went into sports law.

HOST

We have another caller on the line. Mr. Sam Stern from Atherton, California. Go ahead, sir.

CALLER #2

Yes, Mr. Cosell. If you're so smart and right all the time -- and tell it like it is -- why did you die all alone and an alcoholic, with no friends and no one liking you?

COSELL

Not true. My dog liked me. And my neighbor's cat did, too. But my dog hated that cat. Oh, and your sister liked me as well. Especially in an alley behind Giants Stadium. Any more smart-ass questions?

CALLER #2

Yeah. What was it like to be married to "Emmy" for so long?

COSELL

Like opening the fridge for 54 years and seeing the same food in there every day.

HOST

[Interrupts] So you were never tempted by another?

COSELL

I never eat another person's food. Except my wife's sour cream cake Robustelli. She was a fabulous cook, but this particular dessert was my favorite. Takes a little over an

hour to make. I had my grandson post the recipe online. Check it out.

HOST

I certainly will. Never heard of a "Robustelli" cake, I must admit.

COSELL

It's not a cake, it's a person. A good buddy of mine, Andy Robustelli, was a Hall of Fame defensive end for the New York Giants as well as a close family friend – and a huge fan of Emmy's cooking. This was his favorite dessert...she made it for him every time he came over, so when he retired from football, she named it after him. Andy called it the icing on the cake of his career.

HOST

Very sweet. Pardon the pun. [pause] If you could go back in time and change one thing, what would it be?

COSELL

That's easy. My junior high school years.

HOST

What happened?

COSELL

That's where my sports career ended -- before it ever began. In the shower after my first P.E. class, with a thousand towel snaps to my testicles.

HOST

Sounds harsh.

COSELL

Never took a shower at school again. Hence, no sports. Started stinking so bad the principal sent me home.

HOST

Mr. Cosell, let's revisit for a minute the time in your life where you sort of disappeared from the limelight. Right about when your wife Emmy died.

COSELL

Jesus Christ, really?

HOST

It's so the audience can get a complete picture of you.

COSELL

Just Google a damn photo. I mean, 54 years with one person and they suddenly disappear. You'd booze it up, too!

HOST

Five years after her death and you were gone. This brought an odd mix of responses. Very few people cried at your funeral. Why do you think that is?

COSELL

They were there for the free drinks and food.

HOST

We're almost out of time. What do you think your place in history will be?

COSELL

Who cares? Time will tell. I'd be more famous if I banged more women.

HOST

There's a certain truth to that.

COSELL

Yep. I tell it like it is.

HOST

We received a text message before the show from comedian Billy Crystal. He writes, "Howard, thanks for giving me my first shot on national television, and for introducing me to The Champ."

COSELL

Billy, it was my pleasure. You were simply mah-velous!

HOST

What show was this?

COSELL

I hosted a show in 1975 on ABC called "Saturday Night Live" that lasted a few months. It was the same year that NBC launched a show called "NBC's Saturday Night,"

which changed its name to "Saturday Night Live" when my show got canned.

HOST

I'll bet not too many people know that.

COSELL

They do now. Anyway, Billy came on and did his Cosell and Ali impressions. He pretty much stole the show.

HOST

We also received an e-mail from a Mr. Tim Gannon from Newtown, Pennsylvania. He credits you with inventing cancel culture for your use of the word monkey on Monday Night Football, and the subsequent cancellations of your various shows.

COSELL

With that comment, I assume he's not looking for an autographed picture of me and Farrah Fawcett on *Sports Illustrated*. I was buried with that issue, by the way, and a soft rag that now feels like Plaster of Paris.

HOST

Lovely. [pause] You also hosted "Battle of the Network Stars" around that time.

COSELL

From 1976 to 1978, yes, we did nineteen 2-hour specials. The concept was to pit the stars from each network against one another in various sporting events. I pushed for some

serious corn-holing –- not today's version mind you -- but the top brass wouldn't go for it. [laughs]

HOST

Do you have any parting advice or observations about sports today?

COSELL

Sure. I think sports have become too violent. In the past, we ran a clip every week on Wide World of Sports called the thrill of victory, the agony of defeat –- when a skier would wipe out going down a mountain. That's what people secretly wanted to see. Same with car racing, they wait for the fiery crash. Or in ice hockey they hope a fight breaks out. It's not healthy, although I would've loved to cover the Tonya Harding ice skating event...that girl really knows how to take a knee.

HOST

Speaking of which, what do you think of athletes taking a knee at sporting events?

COSELL

It's ridiculous. It's a game, not a protest. There's a time and a place for everything. You don't see anybody playing football at an abortion rally.

HOST

And there you have it. The story, the words, and the truth straight from Mr. Howard Cosell's infamous mouth.

[pause] Ed Sabol at NFL Films once said, “Fifty percent of the people hate him, fifty percent of the people love him, and one hundred percent of the people watch him.”

COSELL

Because I tell it like it is.

HOST

You certainly do. [to camera] Good night from Westhampton Cemetery in New York. I’m Steven Kunes, and we’ll see you again soon on the next episode of “Over My Dead Body.”

FADE OUT.

"WALTER CRONKITE: AND THAT'S THE WAY IT IS!"

(Episode 11)

FADE IN:

EXT. MOUNT MORIAH CEMETERY – DAY

[Host is seated next to the headstone of Walter Cronkite]

HOST

Hello, and welcome to another episode of "Over My Dead Body," and a very special one at that. I'm Steven Kunes, and today we'll be speaking with the man for whom the word legend was created -- newscaster extraordinaire, Walter Cronkite. For those of our viewers who may have just arrived from another planet, Walter Cronkite was the anchorman for the CBS Evening News for 19 years and was often cited as the most trusted man in America. This is a far cry from how journalists are described today. Cronkite reported many events between 1937 and 1981, including World War II, the Nuremburg trials, combat in the Vietnam War, Watergate, the Iran Hostage Crisis -- and the assassinations of President John F. Kennedy, Civil Rights pioneer Martin Luther King, Jr. and Beatles musician John Lennon. He was also known for his extensive coverage of the U.S. Space Program, from Project Mercury to the moon landings to the space shuttle. In fact, he was the only non-NASA recipient of the Ambassador of Exploration Award. Most of all, Cronkite was well known for his departing catchphrase, "And That's The Way It Is," at the end of each broadcast. I couldn't possibly be more excited to welcome today's guest, live from Mount Moriah Cemetery in Kansas City, Missouri –- Mr. Walter Cronkite.

CRONKITE

You left out the Emmy and Peabody Awards.

HOST

And humble as well.

CRONKITE

Thank you, sir. [laughs]

HOST

And your timing is perfect. For the last several years, all we've heard is the term "fake news" bandied about, and the public outcry, "Where's Walter Cronkite when we need him?"

CRONKITE

Well I'm six feet underground in Kansas City and bored out of my freakin' skull, so I can't thank you enough for inviting me on your show.

HOST

It's our pleasure. First of all, for the younger members in our audience who may not know about you, would you mind sharing a bit of your background?

CRONKITE

Not at all. I was born on November 4, 1916 in St. Louis, Missouri, not far from where I'm buried now. My mother was Helen, and my father was Walter...a dentist.

HOST

Did he want you to follow in his footsteps?

CRONKITE

Of course. But looking in people's mouths and smelling bad breath wasn't my thing. Or having them fart in the chair while getting a filling. Guess I'm funny that way.

HOST

So you were named after your dad.

CRONKITE

Nothing gets past you, eh? Actually, my dad was Dutch, and our name was Krankheyt. Thank God my grandfather changed it.

HOST

And you grew up in Missouri?

CRONKITE

Nope. We moved to Houston when I was ten. As a kid I was in the Boy Scouts, before they let girls in, and I was the editor of my high school newspaper at San Jacinto High. Then it was off to college at the University of Texas at Austin.

HOST

That's where your papers are housed, right?

CRONKITE

Who knew when I was a student there, that one day they'd have 293 linear feet of my personal papers. Cleaned out the whole garage and a shed out back.

HOST

What was your major in college?

CRONKITE

None, actually. I dropped out after my sophomore year, but I did work on the school paper, the Daily Texan, and joined a fraternity. I also toyed with the idea of becoming an actor, so I performed in a play with a fellow student named Eli Wallach. He showed me I wasn't an actor, and I showed him he wasn't a reporter.

HOST

Funny, you don't have a Texas accent.

CRONKITE

I learned early on that newsmen shouldn't sound like Festus on "Gunsmoke." [in heavy Texas accent] "President Carter met with the Prime Minister of Japan today and the two had themselves a rollicking good time discussing world peace and sushi. And that's the way it is."

HOST

Good point. Where did you go after college?

CRONKITE

I got a job as a sports announcer in Kansas City. My on-air name was Walter Wilcox.

HOST

How did that work out?

CRONKITE

Shitty. I switched to news after that, but it was there in Kansas City that I met my wife, Betty.

HOST

I hear it was a very good marriage.

CRONKITE

She's buried under me, if that means anything.

HOST

And after you got married you went where...?

CRONKITE

I got a job with United Press International and covered World War II. Went up in a B-17 several times and even got to fire a machine gun at a German fighter jet.

HOST

Really?

CRONKITE

Not some staged event like Dan Rather in the battlefield with a dry-cleaned uniform, or Brian Williams in an imaginary helicopter. What a pair of jerk-offs.

HOST

Okay.

CRONKITE

Picture a Ken doll in Army fatigues.

HOST

Got it. (beat) So you did war coverage and somehow ended up hosting a show called “You Are There.”

CRONKITE

Yes, in 1956. A program where we’d re-enact people from our history and culture. Very much like this show. We covered the Civil War, the Great Depression, Prohibition, the signing of the U.S. Constitution, the Boston Tea Party, things like that.

HOST

Sounds like quite an effort.

CRONKITE

To keep it accurate, yes. We hired three blacklisted screenwriters to write 50 of the shows’ scripts. I said then and I’ll say it now...if you live honestly with integrity with the historical version and then dramatize it, you are not committing any sin at all.

HOST

That show, combined with your early work on the radio for UPI and field coverage on television, led to an offer from the legendary Edward R. Morrow in 1950 to work for CBS.

CRONKITE

It certainly did. I initially declined that offer, but Murrow eventually wore me down and I came to New York, as long as he promised to knock it off with that stupid middle initial. That "R" drove me crazy. Anyway, I became the evening news anchor in 1962 and just one year later told America that JFK had been shot and killed.

HOST

You wiped tears away as you did that report and forever entered the heart of the country.

CRONKITE

It was awful. I took longer than the other outlets to verify that Kennedy had died. Partly because I didn't want to get such an important story wrong, but mainly because I was hoping it wasn't true.

HOST

Some say it cemented your reputation for journalistic credibility. One that's still talked about today.

CRONKITE

I saw too many people rush to be first, to scoop the competition, only to end up with egg on their face. Nothing worse than a face full of egg.

HOST

And you never seemed to offer an opinion on what you were reporting.

CRONKITE

And I never will. It would hurt my credibility with the public. Our responsibility is to report the facts as we know them and let the public weigh their importance.

HOST

According to Wikipedia, you were known to the public as Uncle Walter, The Average Guy, Our National Security Blanket, and The Most Trusted Man In America.

CRONKITE

They also called me Old Iron Pants.

HOST

Why is that?

CRONKITE

Because when I was getting shot at, up in that B-17 over Germany, I didn't shit my drawers.

HOST

That would do it.

CRONKITE

But I'll let you in on a little secret. I told the truth on the air so I could get away with lying in my personal life, mainly to my wife.

HOST

How so?

CRONKITE

No, honey, I would never go to a whorehouse. You don't look a day over forty, silly girl. Nobody gives head like you.

HOST

I suppose credibility has its advantages.

CRONKITE

You bet your ass it does. LBJ once said, "If I've lost Cronkite, I've lost middle America." I'd end every broadcast with the words "And that's the way it is..." because that's the way it was.

HOST

"The Tonight Show" host Jack Paar insisted, "I don't believe in God, but I believe in Walter Cronkite."

CRONKITE

That clown would believe anything. Hey Jack, the humpback whale can masturbate and drive a Buick at the same time. [laughs]

HOST

Speaking of "The Tonight Show," what did you think of Johnny Carson's imitation of you when you announced your retirement in 1981?

CRONKITE

Loved it. He did me better than me.

HOST

Would you mind taking a few calls from our viewers?

CRONKITE

It would be my pleasure.

HOST

Zoe from Ossining, New York, say hello to Walter Cronkite.

CALLER 1

Oh my, well hello Mr. Cronkite.

CRONKITE

Hello, Zoe. That's a beautiful name.

CALLER 1

Thank you. I wrote a term paper about you in high school a few years ago and read in your autobiography that you said, and I quote, "I'd like nothing better than to be an Irish bar drunk, making friends with everybody."

CRONKITE

That's absolutely true.

CALLER 1

So my question is –- can you tell us some Irish bar jokes?

CRONKITE

Does Dolly Parton sleep on her back? [beat] Why don't you iron a four-leaf clover? Because you don't want to press your luck.

CALLER 1

Funny.

CRONKITE

Why did the Irishman bring a ladder to the bar? Because he heard the drinks were on the house.

CALLER 1

Makes sense.

CRONKITE

One more. (beat) Father Murphy walks into a pub in Dublin and says to the first man he meets, "Do you want to go to heaven?" The man says, "I do, Father." The priest says, "Then stand over there against the wall." Then the priest asks a second man, "Do you want to go to heaven?" "Certainly, Father," replies the man. "Then stand over there against the wall," says the priest. Then Father Murphy walks up to "O'Toole and says, "Do you want to go to heaven?" And O'Toole says, "No I don't, Father." The priest says, "I don't believe this. You mean to tell me that when you die you don't want to go to heaven?" And

O'Toole says, "Oh, when I die, yes. I thought you were getting a group together for a trip right now." (laughs)

CALLER 1

That's great! Thank you.

HOST

Okay, so getting back to your nineteen years as the CBS news anchorman, Tom Shales of the Washington Post wrote that you taught yourself to speak 124 words per minutes, versus the normal speed of 165-200 words per minute.

CRONKITE

It was a little trick I figured out early on. It made viewers listen more carefully and hang on my every word.

HOST

It was very effective.

CRONKITE

But that wasn't my original intent. I'd developed a slow speech style when explaining to my wife why I was coming home so late. I was drunk as a skunk and didn't want to slur my words.

HOST

Your wife Betty described you as a frustrated song and dance man.

CRONKITE

I was the fastest floor man since Caesar Romero! I was also known to do an impromptu striptease at dinner parties. Betty called me a closet stripper and a thwarted cruise director.

HOST

A striptease...?

CRONKITE

Well, I am from Missouri...the "show me" state. [laughs]

HOST

True. (beat) Perhaps your outgoing personality played a role in your popularity. Throughout the 1970s, you were rated the best-liked figure on television, ahead of Johnny Carson and four times more popular than Cher.

CRONKITE

I'm pretty much the same person on the air as off, and I'm a good storyteller.

HOST

So what was the story about you driving a race car off a 110-foot cliff in the 1950s?

CRONKITE

I was at the New York car show and bought an Austin Healy on a whim. Had no idea what I was doing. We were in the Great Smokey Mountains, in Tennessee, and started

at the top in a race to the bottom. Needless to say, I got there first.

HOST

You certainly did.

CRONKITE

Actually splashed down in Lake Ocoee. My back still hurts just talking about it.

HOST

And you also had a boat that you crashed into the rocks off Martha's Vineyard.

CRONKITE

Are we on "This Is Your Life?" (beat) Not sure who your sources are, but you're deadly accurate. Another impulse purchase. Betty and I were at a boat show in North Carolina, and I saw a nice Westsail 42-foot yawl and wrote the guy a check on the spot. From that point on I was Captain Walter. [laughs]

HOST

You don't believe in shopping around?

CRONKITE

I had a little too much single-malt Scotch that day and made an unplanned visit to Plymouth Rock. Had to wait four hours until the tide rolled in. By that time, I was drunk and had fallen asleep in the cabin and woke up in a puddle

of my own making, if you get my drift. Not one of my better days.

HOST

Would you mind speaking with a journalism student?

CRONKITE

I'm here to serve. [laughs]

HOST

We have Harrison from the Arizona State University/Walter Cronkite School of Journalism on the line.

CRONKITE

Well knock me over with a feather.

CALLER 2

Mr. Cronkite, this is such an honor to be speaking to the man that my school is named after.

CRONKITE

I have tears in my eyes. I'm flattered. What can I do for you, young man?

CALLER 2

I have two questions. One about the past, one in the present.

CRONKITE

A now and then inquiry.

CALLER 2

Yes, sir. How did the news differ from today –- back when you were on the air?

CRONKITE

First off, we had no video when I began. We had to develop film of news coverage –- so news was rarely instant unless it was a feed through our own cable from Washington or purchased via cable or satellite for a really big story.

HOST

And news wasn't available 24/7.

CRONKITE

Nope. Our program was twenty-seven minutes -- twenty-four minutes for news and three minutes for Eric Severeid to blow off his load.

CALLER 2

And much of that was reports from correspondents, right?

CRONKITE

Affirmative. About thirteen minutes. So I was actually on the air fourteen minutes each night. Yet critics called me an air hog. You know, Harrison, I've always felt we were really just a headline service. I wish people didn't rely on us so heavily. But hell, I was seen on two hundred stations and getting three hundred grand a year with three months off.

CALLER 2

And you have a great journalism school named after you.

CRONKITE

Indeed I do. I hope your parents aren't getting hosed too much on the tuition.

CALLER 2

The second part of my question is...what do you think of reporters having medical procedures live on the air, like Katie Couric having a colonoscopy?

CRONKITE

It's disgusting, inappropriate, completely unprofessional, has nothing whatsoever to do with journalism -– and I love every second of it. My only criticism is they don't do it enough. A camera in the ass is a good start, don't misunderstand me, but I want to see some mammograms and PAP smears, for God's sake.

HOST

In a similar vein, for lack of a better word, what did you think of the journalist who got caught masturbating on a Zoom call during a story conference?

CRONKITE

Loved it. I suppose you could say he was multi-tasking. What was going through that guy's mind? I'm sure the people on that conference call are wondering to this day which one of them he was focused on.

HOST

And yet they didn't fire him. He was back on the air, at least for a while. What would you say to that guy?

CRONKITE

Step away from the vehicle and keep your hands where I can see them. (laughs) Seriously, any guy caught playing with himself on a conference call should do the right thing and jump out the nearest window.

HOST

Our next caller is Abbie, a librarian from Philadelphia. What's your question for Walter Cronkite?

CALLER 3

Good day to you, sir. I'm wondering who your favorite person was that you interviewed, and why?

CRONKITE

That's an excellent question, Abbie. And for the record, I think librarians have a sex appeal like no other.

CALLER 3

That's what my ex-husband said before he cheated on me with a guy.

CRONKITE

Okay, well now...in answer to your question, in 1962 I interviewed a puppet named Charlemagne. A stuffed lion who would give all sorts of crazy answers to my questions.

He would offer his opinion on just about anything, and I got to choose what he said. I really loved it. I reported facts, but puppets could express opinions. The folks who call themselves reporters today all remind me of Charlemagne.

HOST

Seriously Mr. Cronkite, why do you think people welcomed being interviewed by you?

CRONKITE

I was honest and low-key. The most important thing in doing an interview is to get the subject to relax. Trust takes time, and I was in no hurry. Slowly but surely, my guests would relax and let their guard down and open up. Unlike Mike Wallace, who would pound on a guy's front door and plunge a Sennheiser mic in his sphincter with no grease.

HOST

Weren't you known to show up unannounced from time to time?

CRONKITE

That I was. If I found myself in a particular town and read in the local paper that a person was getting married or there was a high school graduation or church event, I'd pop in for a quick hello. I've been to dance recitals, bar mitzvahs, you name it.

HOST

Why were you considered the gold standard for journalism?

CRONKITE

Simple. I was in no hurry for a scoop. I did extensive research at my desk and wouldn't report anything unless I knew it to be true. In my 44 years in television broadcasting, I never offered my opinion. What's reported today are made-up stories based upon selected facts. Let me put it this way –- if you happen to witness an event, say it's a car accident or a robbery, and then turn on your TV and flip the channels amongst the various news programs, you'll see very different versions of the event you just witnessed. That's not reporting, that's propaganda.

HOST

You wrote in your autobiography, "A Reporter's Life," that objective journalism and an opinion column are about as similar as the Bible and Playboy magazine. And that a journalist covering politics must remain unbiased in their reporting, that's it's one of the fundamentals of good journalism –- and that real journalism is what we need to make democracy work.

CRONKITE

And look where it got me...I'm revered by all the fake journalists. What a bunch of hypocrites. You'd think they'd miss my pretty little face.

HOST

Well on behalf of our viewers, we certainly do. (beat) I'm surprised you never got a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

CRONKITE

Because I'm a journalist, not an actor. Mike Wallace and Chet Huntly and Anderson Cooper and Edward R. Murrow have stars, that was their prerogative, but it's not right. I did, however, accept the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1981. Jimmy Carter kissed me on both cheeks. Right out of "The Godfather."

HOST

Well you <u>were</u> the most famous and admired broadcast journalist in the world, so that's <u>kind</u> of like a godfather.

CRONKITE

You make a good point.

HOST

And didn't the FBI keep a file on you?

CRONKITE

The FBI kept a file on <u>everybody</u> –- but when I asked to

see mine, they said it had been “destroyed.”

HOST

I can’t begin to tell you how much we appreciate your taking the time to speak with us. Do you have any final words for our viewers?

CRONKITE

As a matter of fact, I do. I know it’s been a while, but would it be too much to ask if I took us out, so to speak?

HOST

It would be my honor.

CRONKITE

[begin teletype] Hello again, this is Walter Cronkite.

Back in the more familiar battleground of Washington, we’d like to sum up our findings in Ukraine -— findings that must be speculative, personal, and, like a Kamala Harris press conference, probably a little confusing. Who’s winning? Who’s losing? Well, that depends on who you ask. The U.S. seems to be winning in the “Sending Aid Olympics,” but I wouldn’t put Russia down for the count just yet. Kamala Harris is still laughing, which may or may not be a sign of progress, and Donald Trump? He’s probably already written his victory tweet...for a war he’s not actually involved in.

On the horizon, we’re looking at another standoff. Picture this: Kamala nervously giggling in the Situation Room

while trying to explain the difference between a ceasefire and a time-out. Across the table, Trump, now freshly self-appointed Secretary of Everything, interrupts with, "Back in my day, we didn't have standoffs. We had showdowns. Big, beautiful showdowns. And everybody won -- mostly me.

Ukraine might hold on. It might not. Too often, we've been disappointed by the optimism of American leaders. I mean, every time Kamala says, "We're on the right track," it's hard not to wonder if she's actually talking about her favorite Amtrak route. Meanwhile, Trump is busy planning the most tremendous peace summit -- at Mar-a-Lago, of course -- where he'll broker a deal between Ukraine, Russia, and a buffet table. It'll be tremendous, believe me. No one negotiates deals like Trump. Unless, of course, you count the time Kamala "negotiated" her way through an interview about AI.

It's rumored the Russians have finally realized they can't win a long war of attrition. Maybe someone sent Putin a Kamala soundbite, or maybe he tuned into Trump's podcast, where Trump confidently declared, "This war? I could end it by next week. Easy. Just a couple phone calls, boom, done. They'd all be thanking me. The Ukrainians, the Russians, the Democrats. Tremendous."

If the Russians expect to improve their position at the negotiating table, we might finally understand something important: negotiations mean dialogue. Actual, coherent

dialogue. Not whatever happens when Kamala starts using big words and Trump interrupts with, “Wrong!”

And it seems more certain than ever that the bloody mess in Ukraine will end in -- you guessed it -- a stalemate. A standoff as inevitable as Trump denying the results of any future negotiations he didn’t personally oversee. Either we’ll witness real diplomacy -- though at this point, that’s about as likely as Kamala delivering a speech without at least five awkward laughs, or Trump being invited to the White House Christmas party.

Each round of “We’ll send more aid” vs. “We’ll just keep bombing” brings us closer to a kind of cosmic comedy. Imagine Kamala saying, “We’ve got this!” while fumbling with a map of Eastern Europe, and Trump launching his latest “great idea” to end the war by turning the Donbas into a new Trump Resort and Golf Course. It’s the kind of international incident that you’d expect from a sitcom, except it’s real life, and unfortunately, it’s still happening.

To say we’re closer to victory today is like believing Kamala when she says she’s “been to the border.” To suggest we’re on the edge of defeat is to follow Trump down the rabbit hole of hyperbole and Mar-a-Lago menu recommendations. But to say we’re mired in a stalemate? Now that’s the truth. A stalemate spiced up with Kamala’s non-answers and Trump’s endless “winning” catchphrases, all while the world collectively sighs and wonders how we got here.

In the end, this reporter must conclude that the only way out is to negotiate -- not as winners, not as the greatest deal-makers of all time, sorry Donald, but as people who tried their best. Maybe one day, we'll all look back on this as the time Kamala finally got a joke to land, and Trump found a war he couldn't tweet his way out of. Until then, we can only hope for peace -- or at least, for someone to hit the mute button on the press conferences.

And that's the way it is on this bright and sunny day. Thank you all for tuning in. This is Walter Cronkite. We'll see you again soon on the next episode of "Over My Dead Body."

FADE OUT.

"DR. RUTH: GET SOME!"

(Episode 12 – Series Finale)

FADE IN:

EXT. WASHINGTON HEIGHTS – DAY

[A TINY RED SCOOTER DRIVES THROUGH MANHATTAN TRAFFIC. ON THE BACK IS A GIANT MICROPHONE]

HOST (V.O.)

When you think of sex symbols, you probably don't picture a four-foot-seven Jewish grandmother with a German accent.

CUT TO:

[THE SCOOTER PULLS UP IN FRONT OF THE CEDAR PARK CEMETERY]

HOST (V.O.)

But for millions of Americans, Dr. Ruth Westheimer changed the way we talked about sex. She survived the Holocaust, trained as a sniper, earned a doctorate, wrote forty-five books, and somehow became America's favorite sex therapist.

EXT. CEDAR PARK CEMETERY – GRAVESITE - DAY

[A SMALL SPEAKER IS ATTACHED TO DR. RUTH'S HEADSTONE]

DR. RUTH

When it comes to sex, the most important six inches are the ones between the ears.

HOST

And that is why she was the only woman in America who could say "oral sex" and sound like your grandmother reading a bedtime story. [TO CAMERA] Today, Dr. Ruth Westheimer, coming right up.

DISSOLVE TO:

[Opening Animated Credits & Theme Music]

CUT TO:

FADE IN:

EXT. CEDAR PARK CEMETERY – GRAVESITE - DAY

HOST

Hello, I'm Steven Kunes coming to you from the Cedar Park Cemetery in Paramus, New Jersey. Welcome to "Over My Dead Body," the talk show that brings to life the most interesting people from our history and culture. Today's guest survived Nazi Germany, trained as a sniper in Israel, worked as a maid in New York, earned a doctorate at age forty-two, and became America's most famous sex therapist. Live from the Cedar Park Cemetery in Paramus, New Jersey, please welcome Dr. Ruth Westheimer.

DR. RUTH

Thank you. And please don't call me Mrs. Westheimer. Nobody ever called Johnny Carson "Mr. Carson."

HOST

Fair enough. Dr. Ruth, let's start at the beginning. You were born in Germany in 1928.

DR. RUTH

Yes. Back then people worried about inflation. Little did they know Nazis were coming.

HOST

Your father was arrested after Kristallnacht.

DR. RUTH

I still remember watching him being taken away. I was only ten years old. I never saw him again.

HOST

Almost immediately your family sent you away on the Kindertransport to Switzerland.

DR. RUTH

The hardest thing my parents ever did. The smartest thing, too.

HOST

You later learned they were murdered during the Holocaust.

DR. RUTH

Yes. But here's what I want people to remember. Hate is not history. It can come back. That's why people must speak up.

HOST

Most people know you as a sex therapist. They don't know you were basically a tiny Jewish Rambo.

DR. RUTH

[LAUGHS]

I was only four-foot-seven. With a rifle I was a smaller target.

HOST

You joined the Hagenah in what was, at the time, British controlled Palestine.

DR. RUTH

I learned to shoot, throw grenades, and assemble a rifle in the dark.

HOST

That is not the usual résumé for a therapist.

DR. RUTH

No. Usually therapists don't know seventeen different ways to kill you.

HOST

And you were seriously wounded during the war.

DR. RUTH

On my twentieth birthday. An exploding shell nearly took both my feet.

HOST

Most people would have stopped there.

DR. RUTH

Nonsense. I was too busy.

HOST

You moved to Paris.

DR. RUTH

Studied psychology at the Sorbonne.

HOST

Then came America.

DR. RUTH

And began cleaning other people's apartments.

HOST

You worked as a maid?

DR. RUTH

For seventy-five cents an hour.

HOST

Imagine hiring Dr. Ruth to clean your bathroom.

DR. RUTH

I was very thorough.

HOST

You eventually earned a doctorate.

DR. RUTH

At age forty-two.

HOST

At that age, most people are envisioning retirement.

DR. RUTH

I was envisioning foreplay.

HOST

And eventually you opened a sex therapy practice.

DR. RUTH

At a time when nobody wanted to talk about sex.

HOST

How difficult was that?

DR. RUTH

Very. Americans would discuss nuclear war before discussing orgasms.

HOST

Then came radio.

DR. RUTH

The show was called “Sexually Speaking.”

HOST

The station originally paid you twenty-five dollars a week.

DR. RUTH

Which was still more money than most of my dates spent on me.

HOST

Soon you were the number one radio show in New York.

DR. RUTH

Apparently, America had questions.

HOST

A lot of questions.

DR. RUTH

A shocking number of questions.

HOST

Such as?

DR. RUTH

How often should we have sex?

HOST

And your answer?

DR. RUTH

More often than you're having it now.

HOST

So now you're America's most famous sex therapist...

DR. RUTH

I prefer "sex educator."

HOST

Because therapist sounds too serious?

DR. RUTH

Because if they listened to me, they didn't need therapy anymore.

HOST

Your timing was perfect. America was entering the 1980s.

DR. RUTH

Big hair. Terrible fashion. Excellent decade.

HOST

You were talking openly about sex while everyone else was pretending they didn't know where babies came from.

DR. RUTH

I always found that strange. Everybody was having sex. Nobody wanted to discuss it.

HOST

Then your radio show exploded.

DR. RUTH

Yes. Suddenly everybody wanted advice.

HOST

What surprised you most?

DR. RUTH

How many people had the same problems.

HOST

Such as?

DR. RUTH

Communication.

HOST

That's it?

DR. RUTH

Most problems begin when one person wants sex and the other person wants to watch television.

HOST

That's very insightful.

DR. RUTH

No. That's marriage.

HOST

Soon you were appearing everywhere.

DR. RUTH

Johnny Carson. David Letterman. Magazines. Television.

HOST

People Magazine put you on the cover.

DR. RUTH

My mother would have been very proud.

HOST

And probably very confused.

DR. RUTH

Definitely confused.

HOST

You even appeared in movies.

DR. RUTH

I always wanted to be an actress.

HOST

You hosted television shows.

DR. RUTH

Wrote books.

HOST

Forty-five books. Including “Sex For Dummies” and “The Encyclopedia of Sex.”

DR. RUTH

My fingers still hurt.

HOST

You became one of the most recognizable people in America.

DR. RUTH

Not bad for a four-foot-seven Jewish refugee.

HOST

You once said your accent was too expensive to get rid of.

DR. RUTH

Speech lessons cost money.

HOST

And now people imitate it.

DR. RUTH

Life is funny.

HOST

You know what else is funny?

DR. RUTH

What?

HOST

The fact that America's sex expert sounded like she should be teaching kindergarten.

DR. RUTH

That is exactly why parents trusted me. By the way, in 1950, before I came to America, I taught kindergarten in Paris.

HOST

You made sex education approachable.

DR. RUTH

And fun.

HOST

And profitable.

DR. RUTH

Also fun.

HOST

Let's talk about some of your famous advice.

DR. RUTH

Oh dear.

HOST

You once said, "When it comes to sex, the most important six inches are the ones between the ears."

DR. RUTH

Still true.

HOST

And your famous catchphrase.

DR. RUTH

Get some!

HOST

You realize millions of grandmothers never said those words.

DR. RUTH

That's why they needed me.

HOST

You also said anything two consenting adults do in private is fine with you.

DR. RUTH

Assuming nobody gets hurt.

HOST

Even on the kitchen floor?

DR. RUTH

Especially on the kitchen floor.

HOST

Julia Child would have loved you.

DR. RUTH

I know. We probably would have written a cookbook together.

HOST

What would it be called?

DR. RUTH

Fifty Shades of Gravy.

HOST

I would buy that.

DR. RUTH

Everybody would buy that.

HOST

In your book “Dr. Ruth’s Guide to Erotic and Sensual Pleasures,” you wrote that women could do something to make performing oral sex on a man more enjoyable. Do you remember what you said?

DR. RUTH

Make believe it’s an ice cream cone.

HOST

Okay...let's take some calls.

DR. RUTH

Wonderful.

HOST

Caller number one is Darren from Santa Barbara, California. You're on the air.

CALLER ONE (O.S.)

Hi Dr. Ruth. My wife says I never listen.

DR. RUTH-121

Then listen to her.

CALLER ONE (O.S.)

But she's not always right.

DR. RUTH

Does she think she's right?

CALLER ONE (O.S.)

Yes.

DR. RUTH

Then she's right.

HOST

That was efficient.

DR. RUTH

Thirty years of experience.

HOST

Caller number two is Casey from Sanford, Florida. Go ahead.

CALLER TWO (O.S.)

Dr. Ruth, what's the secret to a happy marriage?

DR. RUTH

Marry the right person.

CALLER TWO (O.S.)

Anything else?

DR. RUTH

Yes. Stay married to that person.

HOST

Simple enough.

CALLER TWO (O.S.)

We've been married twenty-two years.

DR. RUTH

Congratulations.

CALLER TWO (O.S.)

What's your best advice?

DR. RUTH

Keep talking.

CALLER TWO (O.S.)

About what?

DR. RUTH

Anything.

CALLER TWO (O.S.)

Anything?

DR. RUTH

Eventually you'll get to the important stuff.

HOST

And caller number three is Anthony from Savannah, Georgia.

CALLER THREE (O.S.)

Hi Dr. Ruth. I have a question.

DR. RUTH

That's usually how this works.

CALLER THREE (O.S.)

I read in an interview you gave that you like to look at the positive side of things.

DR. RUTH-146

That’s correct.

CALLER THREE (O.S.)

So I’m wondering given your rather short height of four feet, seven inches, if that has had any effect on your own sex life.

DR. RUTH-148

Let me put it this way: I never had to wear knee pads.

CALLER THREE (O.S.)

I see.

DR. RUTH

When life hands you lemons...

CALLER THREE (O.S.)

Yum yum.

DR. RUTH

Grow up.

CALLER THREE (O.S.)

Ouch.

DR. RUTH

You're welcome.

HOST

You know, Dr. Ruth, people often focus on your humor.

DR. RUTH

Humor helps people learn.

HOST

But your life wasn't always funny.

DR. RUTH

No.

HOST

You lost your parents during the Holocaust and spent years wondering why you survived.

DR. RUTH

I think many survivors ask that question.

HOST

Did you ever find an answer?

DR. RUTH

No. But I decided I had an obligation to live a good life.

HOST

And you certainly did.

DR. RUTH

I tried.

HOST

Late in life you became concerned about loneliness.

DR. RUTH

Very much so.

HOST

Why?

DR. RUTH

Because loneliness is dangerous. More dangerous than people realize. People need connection. Friendship. Family. Community. And yes, love.

HOST

You became New York's Loneliness Ambassador.

DR. RUTH

One of my favorite titles.

HOST

More than sex therapist?

DR. RUTH

Much more.

HOST

That's surprising.

DR. RUTH

Sex is important, but human connection is everything.

HOST

Beautifully said.

DR. RUTH

Thank you.

HOST-

You've received countless awards.

DR. RUTH

Too many to dust.

HOST

Radio Hall of Fame.

DR. RUTH

Wonderful honor.

HOST

The German Order of Merit.

DR. RUTH

That one meant a great deal.

HOST

Your papers are now in the Library of Congress.

DR. RUTH

My children are impressed.

HOST

You had children.

DR. RUTH

Two wonderful children.

HOST

Grandchildren.

DR. RUTH

Four.

HOST

What was your greatest achievement?

DR. RUTH

My family.

HOST

Not the television shows?

DR. RUTH

Television is television.

HOST

Not the books?

DR. RUTH

Books are books.

HOST

Not changing the culture?

DR. RUTH

Family is forever.

HOST

I love that answer.

DR. RUTH

Good.

HOST

One final question.

DR. RUTH

Go ahead.

HOST

If you could leave our audience with one piece of advice, what would it be?

DR. RUTH

Do not waste time.

HOST

Meaning?

DR. RUTH

Tell people you love them.

HOST

That's it?

DR. RUTH

Yes.

HOST

No complicated formula?

DR. RUTH

Life is shorter than you think.

HOST

Anything else?

DR. RUTH

Read books.

HOST

Good advice.

DR. RUTH

Travel.

HOST

Excellent.

DR. RUTH

Have good friends.

HOST

Absolutely.

DR. RUTH

And for heaven's sake –-

HOST

Yes?

DR. RUTH

Get some!

HOST

[LAUGHING]

There it is.

DR. RUTH

You knew it was coming.

HOST

I see we have one final caller. Actually, two callers.

DR. RUTH

Two?

HOST

Stacey and Lawrence, a married couple from Altoona, Pennsylvania. Newlyweds. Go ahead.

HUSBAND (O.S.)

Hi Dr. Ruth.

WIFE (O.S.)

Hello.

DR. RUTH

Why do you sound so far apart?

HUSBAND (O.S.)

Because we're in different bedrooms.

DR. RUTH

Different bedrooms? How long have you been married?

WIFE (O.S.)

Eight months.

DR. RUTH

Eight months? That's less time than it takes to grow a baby. Why are you sleeping separately?

HUSBAND (O.S.)

She says I snore.

WIFE (O.S.)

He does.

HUSBAND (O.S.)

She watches crime shows until three in the morning.

WIFE (O.S.)

They're educational.

DR. RUTH

Have you had sex recently?

[LONG SILENCE]

HOST

Uh oh.

HUSBAND (O.S.)

Not exactly.

WIFE (O.S.)

Our wedding gifts are still stacked in the dining room.

DR. RUTH

You still have unopened wedding gifts?

WIFE (O.S.)

Some of them.

DR. RUTH

This is an emergency!

HOST

A five-alarm marriage fire.

DR. RUTH

Do you love each other?

HUSBAND (O.S.)

Of course.

WIFE (O.S.)

Absolutely.

DR. RUTH

Good. Put down your phones.

HUSBAND (O.S.)

Now?

DR. RUTH

Yes, now.

WIFE (O.S.)

What are we supposed to do?

DR. RUTH

Walk to the kitchen.

HOST

The kitchen?

DR. RUTH

Everybody ends up in the kitchen.

HUSBAND (O.S.)

She's actually coming downstairs.

WIFE (O.S.)

He's actually standing up.

DR. RUTH

Excellent progress.

HOST

This is the most action we've had all season.

HUSBAND (O.S.)

Okay, we're both here.

WIFE (O.S.)

We're standing by the refrigerator.

DR. RUTH

Look at each other.

[LONG PAUSE]

HUSBAND (O.S.)

She's smiling.

WIFE (O.S.)

He's kind of cute when he's nervous.

DR. RUTH

Good. Now hug.

HOST

This is getting emotional.

WIFE (O.S.)

We're hugging.

HUSBAND (O.S.)

Actually, we're really hugging.

DR. RUTH

Wonderful. Now stop talking and start being married.

HOST

Dr. Ruth!

DR. RUTH

What? I'm ninety-six years old. I don't have time to waste.

[THE COUPLE LAUGHS]

Stacey, I want you to sit on the kitchen table with your legs hanging over the side. And Lawrence, treat her like it's Thanksgiving and you haven't eaten in days.

WIFE (O.S.)

Thank you, Dr. Ruth!

HUSBAND (O.S.)

Seriously, thank you!

DR. RUTH

You're welcome. Now hang up.

HOST

You just kicked them off the show.

DR. RUTH

Exactly. They have some serious catching up to do.

[BEAT]

[THROUGH THE PHONE WE HEAR LAUGHTER]

HUSBAND (O.S.)

Honey, should we finally open the toaster?

WIFE (O.S.)

I've got my own toaster right here!

HOST

Well, that's probably our cue.

DR. RUTH

I believe so.

HOST

You just saved a marriage.

DR. RUTH

No. They saved it. I just reminded them why they got married.

HOST

Dr. Ruth Westheimer, everybody.

DR. RUTH

And remember –-

HOST

I know.

DR. RUTH

Get some!

HOST

[LAUGHING AND MOANS OF PLEASURE CAN BE HEARD IN THE BACKGROUND, INCLUDING "GOBBLE GOBBLE" TURKEY SOUNDS]

I'm Steven Kunes. We'll see you again soon on the next episode of "Over My Dead Body."

FADE OUT.

APPENDIX

OMDB.TV GUESTS

COMPLETE EPISODES

Robert Kardashian

Nostradamus

Steve Jobs

Mae West

Richard Nixon

Julia Child

Tupac Shakur

Phyllis Diller

Mark Twain

Howard Cosell

Walter Cronkite

Dr. Ruth Westheimer

About the Author

Steven Kunes grew up in Bucks County, Pennsylvania and attended New York University where he majored in Creative Writing and Comparative Literature. In 1983, TV legend Norman Lear hired Kunes to write and develop half-hour comedies for his company, Embassy Television. This led to assignments in the areas of one-hour TV, movies-of-the-week, and eventually to motion pictures, where he garnered the reputation as one of Hollywood's elite script doctors. Presently, Kunes is the creator and executive producer of "Over My Dead Body," an original comedy series for Amazon Prime. In 2021, Kunes delivered a popular TEDx talk in Philadelphia entitled "Square One at 60." He divides his time between Los Angeles and Philadelphia.